MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

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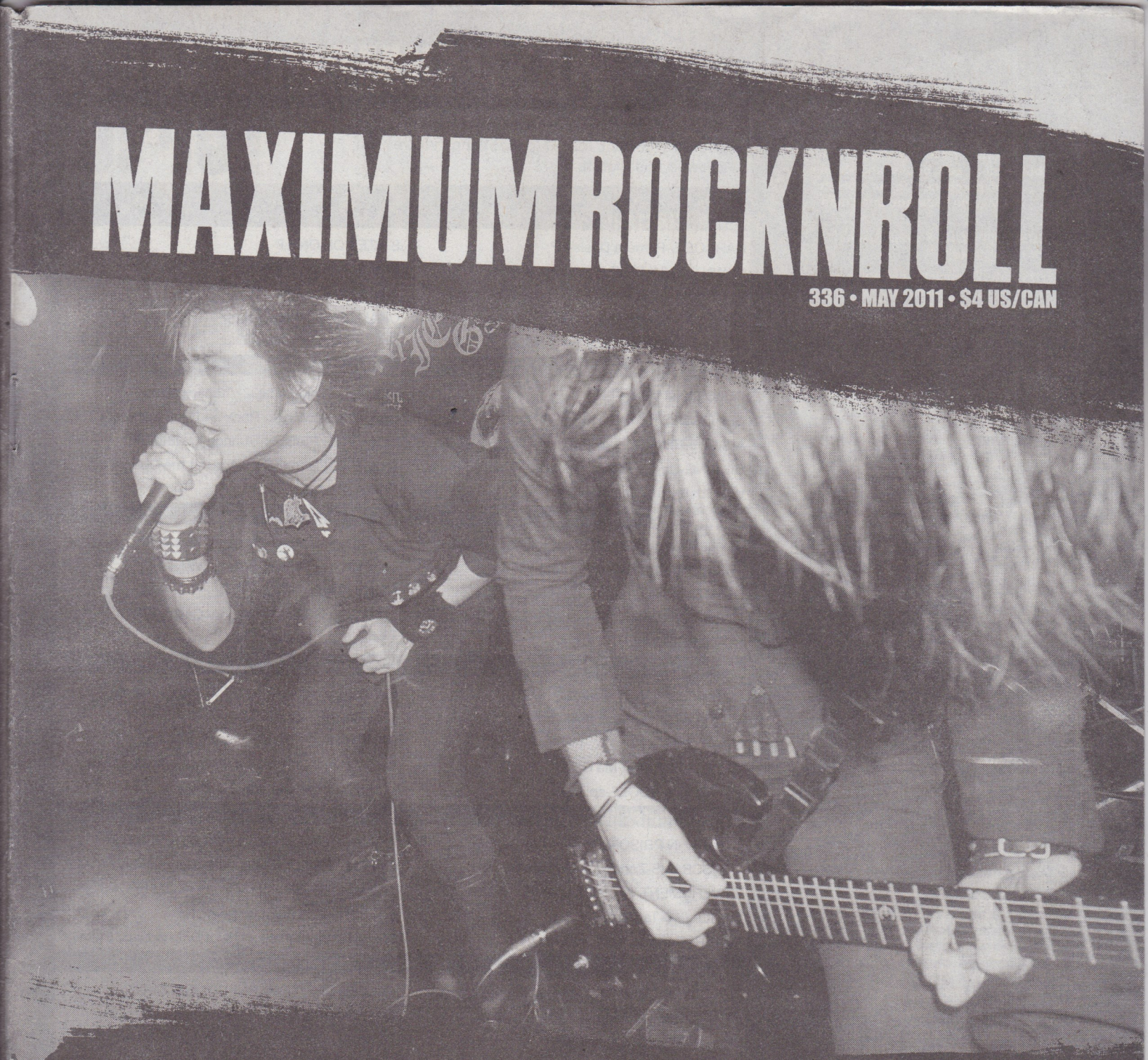

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
179-181, 186-191, 195, 197, 202, 203, 206, 208, 209, 214, 218, 221, 223, 225, 227, 229, 230, 234, 236, 238-247, 249-251, 253-306, 308-320, 322-335

See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

NARCOSIS-Primera Dosis-LP	STATE POISON-LP
DAWN OF HUMANS-Head Process-EP	YADOKAI-Sokushinbutau-EP
V/A-Speed Trials Worst Bands of Michigan-LP	V/A-Busted at OZ-LP
COKSCAR/SCAPHE-split EP	CHALK CIRCLE-Reflection-LP
GLUEAMS-Discography-LP	CÜLO-Toxic Vision-EP

BRACE BELDEN

CÜLO-Toxic Vision-EP	THE VOLCANICS-654321/Kanack Attack-45
CHAOS DESTROY-Be Noise-EP	OBN III'S-No Way to Rock and Roll/Got More...-45
APACHE-Bloody Knuckles/On the Outside-45	WOMEN IN PRISON-Strange Waves-EP
GG KING-Day Turns Into Night/Drug Induced State-45	THREE TOED SLOTH-...Against the Odds-2x45
V/A-Busted at OZ-LP	HPP-NMDB-EP

TIM BROOKS

SEXPISTOLSTANTEN OCH MOCKFJÄRDSVAPNET-LP	M.O.T.O.-Kissing All the Wrong Asses-EP
THE KIDNAPPERS-Will Protect You-LP	WOMEN IN PRISON-Strange Waves-EP
DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP	HERDS-Michigan-EP
BYRDS OF PARADISE-Teenage Symphonies-LP	SNAKEFLOWERS 2-Memory Castle-EP
STATE POISON-LP	AGE/GIUDA-split EP

ROBERT COLLINS

DIARRHEA PLANET-Aloha-EP / OROKU-live	IKNOW-Robe, Kill-EP / DEMONS CLAW-45
TELEFON-Smysl Malych Cinu-LP	YADOKAI-live and EP
STATE POISON-LP	SETIEMBREONCE-No Estamos A Salvo-10"
DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP	SEXPISTOLSTANTEN OCH MOCKFJÄRDSVAPNET-LP
TRASH KIT/WOOLF-split EP	LOVER!-Home Alone/In Death-45

SEAN "DOUGIE" DOUGAN

WOMEN IN PRISON-Strange Waves-EP	THE IRRITONES/NAPOLEON DYNAMITE-EP
THE SCRAMS-Zodak/Eat the Beat-45	OVERNIGHT LOWS-Slit Wrist Rock'n'Roll/I'll...-45
GOVERNMENT WARNING-No Moderation-LP	THE BABIES-LP
DAVILA 666-Tan Bajo-LP	LOVER!-Home Alone/In Death-45
LOVER!-Reverse the Curse-LP	GG KING-Day Turns Into Night/Drug Induced State-45

LAYLA GIBBON

THREE TOED SLOTH-...Against the Odds-2x45	FOLDED SHIRT-LP / PHEROMOANS-LP
CHALK CIRCLE-Reflection-LP	V/A-Busted at OZ-LP
TRASH KIT/WOOLF-split EP	FOREIGN OBJECTS-A Kind of Life/The Key-EP
GLUEAMS-Discography-LP	WEIRD TV-Sufrir/Sex-EP
NARCOSIS-Primera Dosis-LP	COWABUNGA BABES/WOAH HUNX-split EP

DAN GOETZ

CHALK CIRCLE-Reflection-LP	DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP
LOTUS FUCKER-live	WEIRD TV-Sufrir/Sex
WHITE WARDS-live	HPP-NMDB-EP
CONDOMINIUM-live	GETTING EVEN-End Credits-EP
V/A-Speed Trials Worst Bands of Michigan-LP	YADOKAI-Sokushinbutau-EP

BOB GOLDIE

SORRY EXCUSE-Normalcy-EP	DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP
RIP IT UP-Monday, Tuesday, Thursday-EP	GETTING EVEN-End Credits-EP
CÜLO-Toxic Vision-EP	AIRES AND GRACES-Damage Done-EP
VOLCANICS-Girls, Girls, Girls-CD	DEZERTER-Prawo Do Bycia Idiota-LP
THE KIDNAPPERS-Will Protect You-LP	MAGNUMS-II-EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

KENNY KAOS

- THE VOLCANICS-654321/Kanack Attack-45
- APACHE-Bloody Knuckles/On the Outside-45
- LOVER!-Home Alone/In Death-45
- LITERATURE-Cincinnati/In Cruel-45
- JUNGLE FEVER-Cryin' Blood-EP
- M.O.T.O.-Kissing All the Wrong Asses-EP
- THE UNRELEASABLES-Six Songs for Sick Minds-EP
- MAYBE BABY-All I've Got to Lose-EP
- GG KING-Day Turns Into Night/Drug Induced State-45
- LOVER!-Reverse the Curse-LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- TY SEGALL BAND-Live in Aisle 5-LP
- THE SCRAMS-45 / OVERNIGHT LOWS-45
- FOLDED SHIRT-LP
- DAVILA 666-Tan Bajo-LP
- LOVER!-Home Alone/In Death-45
- WOMEN IN PRISON-Strange Waves-EP
- K-HOLES-LP / THEE LUDDS-45
- THE UNRELEASABLES-Six Songs for Sick Minds-EP
- GLUEAMS-Discography-LP
- V/A-Busted at OZ-LP

RAY LUJAN

- ANTILLECTUAL-Start From Scratch-CD
- CAPTAIN, WE'RE SINKING-With Joe Riley-EP
- DIARRHEA PLANET-EP / THE GUNDOWN-LP
- THE HARRINGTON SAINTS-Machine Guns...-EP
- JUNGLE FEVER-Cryin' Blood-EP
- SAME OLD STORY-CD / STEINWAYS-LP
- BLACK FEET-CD / CADDY-Electric Hero-CD
- REVERSE-Chasing Ghosts-CD
- DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS-Much Obliged-CD
- THE EX-live

MARISSA MAGIC

- GLUEAMS-Discography-LP
- NASA SPACE UNIVERSE-Brainrailers-EP
- CHALK CIRCLE-Reflection-LP
- YADOKAI-Sokushinbutau-EP
- THREE TOED SLOTH-...Against the Odds-2x45
- ZULUS-Heatwave-EP
- K-HOLES-LP
- HPP-NMDB-EP
- SOFT SHOULDER-live
- HRS / DYS-live

KEN SANDERSON

- AGE-Survive-EP
- LEFT IN RUINS-Ensam Hatisk Psykstord-10"
- YADOKAI-Sokushinbutau-EP
- APATIA-100% Vegetarian Band-LP
- STATE POISON-LP / BURNING SENSATION-LP
- DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP
- ELDERS-Blind Rage-LP
- SETIEMBREONCE-No Estamos A Salvo-10"
- RAS-Vill Hammer/Ett...-45 / UNHOLY GRAVE-LP
- WSZANIEC-Wideo Mondo-LP

FRED SCHRUNK

- CRACKBOX-In Love Must Mean Stupid-EP
- FOREIGN OBJECTS-A Kind of Life/The Key-EP
- GLUEAMS-Discography-LP
- COWABUNGA BABES/WOAH HUNX-split EP
- SEXPISTOLSTANTEN OCH MOCKFJÄRDSVAPNET-LP
- BROKEN MOUNTAIN/SHANG-A-LANG-split EP
- RAS-Vill Ha Mer/Ett Folk, Ett Ras-45
- WEIRD TV-Sufrir/Sex-EP
- ZULUS-Heatwave-EP
- THREE TOED SLOTH-...Against the Odds-2x45

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- NARCOSIS-Primera Dosis-LP
- GLUEAMS-Discography-LP
- DEEP SLEEP-Turn Me Off-LP
- STATE POISON-LP
- BURNING SENSATION-LP
- YADOKAI-Sokushinbutau-EP
- DAWN OF HUMAN-Head Process-EP
- CÜLO-Toxic Vision-EP
- SEXPISTOLSTANTEN OCH MOCKFJÄRDSVAPNET-LP
- CÜLO / SCHOOL JERKS-live

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Different World Same Heartbeats #4*
- *Filling the Void*
- *Ripping Thrash #27*
- *Kill Someone You Hate #2*
- *Negative Guest List #9*
- *Pasazer #27*
- *Zine World #30*
- *Slingshot #105*
- *Plastic Bomb #73*
- *Sewer Trout #1*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Gutternipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, 1 Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue, Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slóvakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2-20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia.

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Dientе Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea.

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Elaköon Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore.

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain).

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta.

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker.

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.
Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#329/Fall '10. Cock SParrer, UV Race, Veins, Kakka Hätä 77, Saint Vitus, Kontatto, De Hoje Hæle, Moonhearts, Irritones, Beyond Pink, French Scene Report.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholén, Ireland Scene Report.

#331/December '10. Kylmä Sota, Articles of Faith, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt Germany Scene Report, Belgium Scene Report.

#332/January '11. Punk Comics Issue! Shawn Kerri, Jaime Hernandez, Gary Panter, Mimi Pond, Ed Luce, Avi Spivak, Liz Suburbia, Eric Hone, Kaz, John Holmstrom, Bobby Madness, Dennis Worden, Cristy Road, Ben Snakepit, Ted May+Jeff Wilson, Janelle Hessig, Craig Bostick, Fly, Alex ratcharge, Caroline Paquita, Jaime Crespo, Josh Bayer, Ben Lyon, Liz Baille.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, Hpp, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

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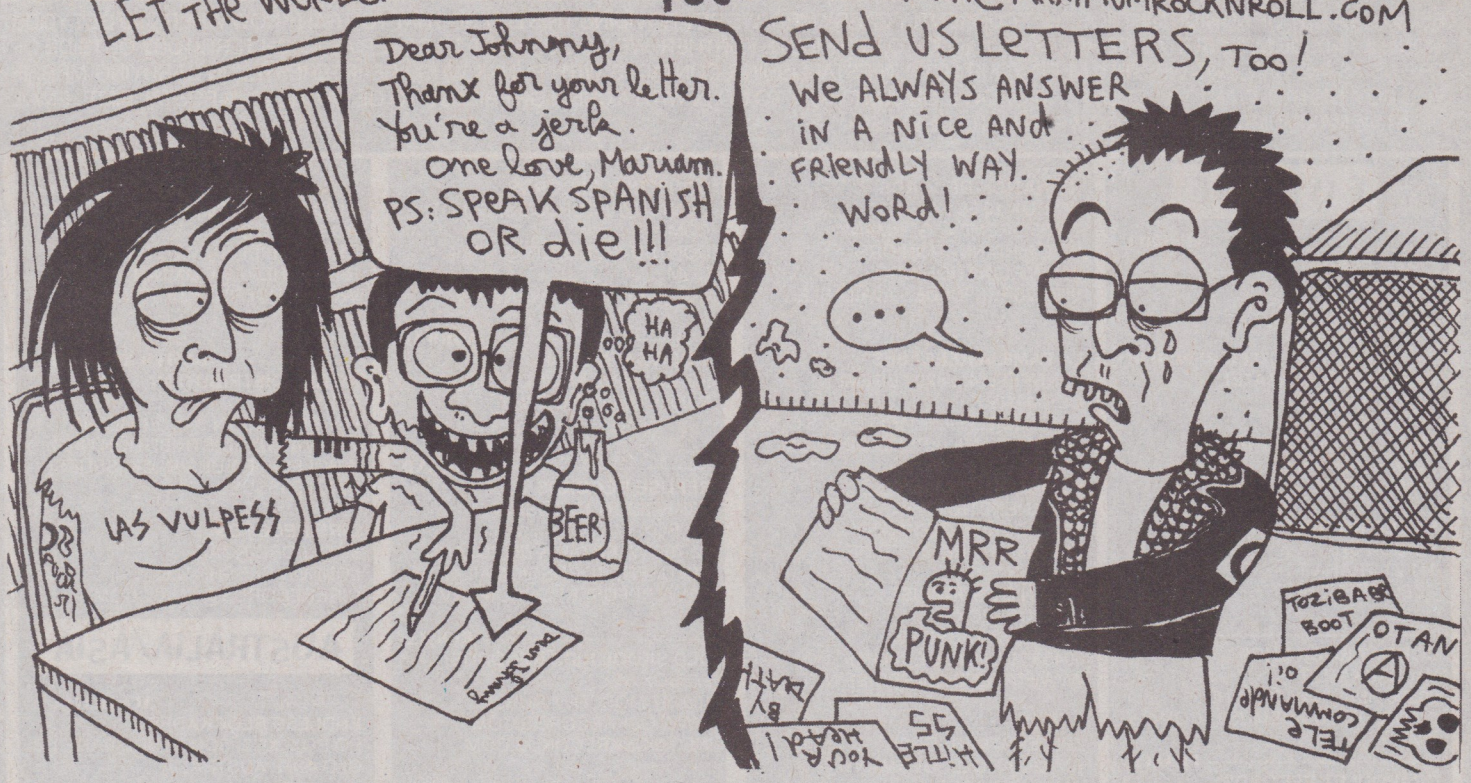

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LETTERS

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Hi Layla, Merm, MRR shitworkers and readers—

All the defensive letters of bands who shill for corporations have immensely amused me. It is even more amusing that not one person who has written one has signed her/his name. The last round included a bunch of fake names though these were also people who didn't really get what was being discussed. The latest letter in issue #335 was simply signed Anonymous. I have a hard time feeling any pity for a nameless musician. If this is really the only way you can survive as a touring band then own up to it. Why are you so ashamed? How can I be expected to respect you, if you can't respect yourself?
—Carolyn Keddy

PS The only band I have ever heard of that turned down Scion's money was the Mummies. Supposedly it was $6000. I'd be willing to bet Anonymous didn't get that much.

Shit! How are the Mummies going to feed their families?
—Mariam

Dear MRR—

I really appreciated your vitriolic response to Scion's appropriation of punk culture and the willingness of so-called ethical bands to take their money. There have been a few Scion sponsored shows here in Richmond (one with an amazing flyer from Eliza Childress), much to my disgust. To their credit, at least a few of the bands (Occultist and Syndrome) were entirely unaware that they would be playing a corporate sponsored show and merely signed on to play in support of their friends bands. To our cities credit, however, our one hc / punk / garage / indie / metal record shop, Vinyl Conflict, remains completely and willfully independent of Scion's appropriations.

Although we will all fall short personally of cutting our ties to unethical corporate blood money, I sincerely hope that at the very least we can keep our music, our shows, and our spaces as detached as possible from blatant marketing schemes by multinational (Keiretsu, nonetheless) corporations. Anyway, while I haven't always agreed with your columns, on this issue (for what it's worth) I agree 100%.
Thanks for calling the fuckers out,
—Max and Black Age,

PS I'll be visiting SF in early march, and will be moving there in August. I very much look forward to volunteering at *Maximum Rocknroll* and continuing to support legit hardcore punk in whatever way I can.

Vinyl Conflict rules, not only for making kick ass music available, but for staying independent. Sounds like we have a new shitworker among the ranks! Please stay in contact with us and let us know when you are here.
—Mariam

Dear MRR—

Regarding the Scion debate in #335's letters section. The "no one is going to buy a Scion" argument falls flat with me. Simply put, Scion is using underground culture as an ad campaign. Maybe it's selling cars and maybe it isn't, but that isn't really the point. Any band that plays a Scion event is getting paid a few hundred bucks more than usual to be a shill for a multibillion-dollar car company. Anonymous' band played a Scion festival, got paid, but still came home "broke, jobless, and hungry." Doesn't sound like it was worth it.
—Matt Smith

Dear "Anonymous"—

Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh.... ahem.....WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!! If you can't tour and put out records without Scion's money, you're fucking doing it wrong. Maybe you just see the DIY community as a launch pad and haven't noticed that bands have been doing this shit and keeping it real for half a century *without* being sponsored by *car companies* or any other corporations. Of course it costs money, but there are plenty of ways to raise those funds yourself, or from within the scene. And that same five or six bucks your band spent at McDonalds has fed my band a reasonably nutritious vegan meal, cooked in a vehicle in about fifteen minutes. Quit whining and decide what it is you want from punk, and what it is you want to contribute.
—Chuck

Dear MRR—

This is in response to two recent columns on the issue of Punk bands and their involvement with the Toyota auto-company Scion Brand, it's concert series and record label. I agree with pretty much everything that Mariam said, the other columnist... not so much.

I wasn't really aware of this issue until very recently, and I have to say... it doesn't really come as a huge surprise in this day and age when a lot of self-proclaimed "punk", "indie" or "garage" bands rely on PR and booking agencies to build-up "hype" and get mentioned in blogs and music magazines (including the pages of *MRR*) or to secure shows at certain venues while on tour instead of using the old DIY technique of calling and e-mailing other bands/friends you may know in the cities you want to play. God forbid you should take the slow route and try to simply rely on the quality or your recorded output and live shows to build up a fan base.

What did surprise me though was the claim made by some of the bands involved that they are not nor have ever been "political" and therefore releasing a record through Scion or playing their fests doesn't really make a difference to them or their fans. Well... in the current political and economic climate, where corporations now have the "freedom" to pump large sums of money into the electoral system, where they play a significant role in financing the media that (sadly) helps shape public opinion, and where in places like Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio corporations are giving financial backing to the war against unions and worker's right to organize, playing a Scion Fest and releasing music through their label is in fact a very "political" act.

This past weekend, while visiting a friend in Washington, DC I stumbled upon a half-letter size black and white "Scion" zine which included features and interviews for the bands Trap Them, Integrity, Magrudergrind, Ceremony, Black Breath, and the Profound Lore record label. (Here is a link to this monstrosity-
http://issuu.com/scion/docs/metal_zine_vol-01)

What really got my attention in the so-called "zine" was a statement made by the singer in Magrudergrind where he berated DC punks as "hypocritical" and "holier than thou" about their politics. I don't know him, his band, have never listened to them, and I moved away from DC quite some time ago so my involvement in their particular scene is pretty much zero. Nonetheless knowing quite a few "politically" motivated punks in the DC area, I find the context in which he makes this statement (not necessarily it's actual message since it could be a reasonable critique)... well, obscene because it appears in a "zine" issued by a FUCKING auto-company—an auto company that most definitely benefits from a depoliticized youth, the kind of people who will never question how they spend their dollars.

Scion is a Toyota Auto Company brand, and like most major corporations Toyota's main goals is to make a "profit", which can (most of the time)

mean they will jump through as many hoops as possible to make sure that they make more money then they spend to make sure they keep investors happy. This means that Toyota will not even flinch at the thought of engaging in abusive labor practices, lowering workers wages and benefits, creating joint business ventures with authoritarian governments (Toyota—through the Toyota Tsusho Corporation which is part of the Toyota Group—is involved in several joint business ventures with the Burmese military junta) and basically working people to death (look up the story of Mr. Kenichi Uchino) to make sure they come out ahead. If you don't believe me, read the National Committee on Labor June 2008 report on Toyota "The Toyota You Don't Know: The Race to the Bottom In The Auto Industry" or the UN's International Labor Organization "Reports of the Committee on Freedom of Association" which exposes Toyota's union busting practices.

I guess if you're in one of those "misanthropic" metal-core bands like Integrity, this is all good and well. But I have to wonder how their hero Charles Manson (who has said in interviews that we should "get back to the horse") would feel about them helping promote an Earth-polluting auto company.

By supporting, or being supported by Scion you are basically saying that you don't give a fuck about working people around the world and that's a stronger "political" statement than some band-member wearing an "A" patch, or "Down With Patriarchy" t-shirt and complaining about gentrification.

Over and out,
—Joao Da Silva
Birds and Wires/Amor y Lucha

PS By the way, and this is really fucking gross:
According to Detroit Free Press Mar 1, 2011
Toyota's sales jump 41.8%
"The youth-oriented Scion brand reported sales of 3,944, a 30% increase from a year earlier."

[redacted] Hi Brontez—
I always read your column and I'm glad you write it. I wanted to respond to what you wrote for the April issue. First off, I want to say that I think it sucks that your friend told you that you couldn't call yourself gay. You should be allowed to call yourself whatever you want and no one should make you feel bad for it. That said, I take issue with some of the points you made about queer identity.

I'm a transguy and I identify as queer. In your column you said, "I liked it better when it was called bi-sexual." I don't call myself bisexual for a very specific reason—I mostly date men. But what word can I use to describe myself? I'm obviously not straight, and neither are the men that I date. But then again, just saying that I'm gay erases the fact that I'm a transguy, which is very different from being a cis-guy (Cis is the opposite of trans—the term is used to describe people who are not transgender). Queer fits me better than any other terms I've heard so far.

Later you say that the use of queer vs. bisexual is a semantic distinction. For many transpeople, it really isn't. As I said above, there are people who aren't straight who aren't attracted to both men and women. Also, there are people who don't think there are only two genders (myself included). The term bisexual isn't a good fit for them because they're genderqueer, or genderfluid, or maybe they are attracted to genderqueer/genderfluid people. Bisexual just isn't the same as queer and the distinction is incredibly significant to many transpeople.

I do agree with you that there should be more of a gender analysis of all this. You ask why you don't see as many male-assigned people coming out as trans or identifying themselves as queer. I think part of the reason is that gender roles are much more strictly enforced for people raised as male. It's hard for all of us to break the gender rules, but it may be harder for male-assigned or male-identified people to do so, especially around other men. Also, in a lot of our communities, transwomen are marginalized. Often transwomen can't be as vocal about their identity and their transition as many transmen because of safety issues. All transpeople face discrimination, but transwomen are much more likely to be assaulted or murdered than transmen, not to mention the less extreme forms of daily violence and ridicule that transwomen face (often in LGB spaces).

You say that most transguys that you know "wouldn't fuck with dick if you paid them." There are a lot of us that like cis-guys, but we are not as visible as transguys who like women—we get marginalized by LGB people, and even other transguys, because of transphobia and homophobia respectively. So you may not know many queer/gay-identified transguys, but we do exist!

Finally, I just wanted to say that I agree with you that the notion that gay=Lady Gaga sucks. Maybe one way we can resist being made into commodities is by working to make the most marginalized of LGBTQ folks visible. I'm still thinking about how to do this, but I think part of it means trusting people to choose their own terms to describe themselves and respecting their decisions.
Thanks,
—Kale

Kale!!!!
Whats up? Not much here. Just chillin..first of all your totally right. I apologize for making you feel invisible. That shit ain't right! I was using this platform to air out a very specific *fight I was having with someone* specifically *and in turn came off sounding insular on a topic that deservers a lot of sensitivity.*

I apologize to you, fellow warrior, you are not the soul I'd want to piss off trying to clown someone else... Like the "bi-sexual" comment was very *specific. But again, I have to say I do have this problem with the word queer now becoming the "catch-all," as is the problem with a lot of terms falls under the "catch-all" is that they can sometimes be manipulated and then don't really say anything. And maybe it is my Bay Area jadedness*—Honey, people talk identity politics all day in this motherfucker! *It gets* really fucking boring. Trust—*and then I also think of the six boys I hook up with in the East Bay and how they got girl-friends and don't really air there gay business (ie.* punk rock down low*) and* then *I think about the girl my friend told me about in a PhD program writing a book on* Queerity *when she had some clumsy college lesbian experiences and mostly fucks bio-dudes.* She's the last "homo" *that should be getting funding for that shit!*

When we use the word queer, warriors like you and I are officially in the same club as these fucking posers *and my ego won't let me have it. I feel like the term "Queer" has this erasing effect, y'know? Like it describes* some *people I know* really well *and all the others not so much. I would love for a "Utopic" word/feeling that could include us all, but I think there are too many fucking humans to make any thing like that relevant. But as I don't really have a better word I guess I'm stuck too!*

I also have to go a step farther and say after being in the realm of this tawdry bullshit for so long I no longer trust everyone's *terms on how they describe themselves. In fact, I now sometimes find myself drawing lines in the sand and critiquing motherfuckers with* extreme intolerance *because otherwise I find my self privy to some pretty inexcusable bullshit (I've given you examples). But of course, I'm also subject to this and I don't mind being called out when my shit smells.* And it smmmmmmmmellllsssss sometimes *:) But I'm not above reproach (like what fun would that be?) and again I think your kool. If you ever come to my town we should maybe have a coffee and talk more about this.*
Much Love fellow Warrior,
—Bronny
PS Kale your name is delicious. Forgive me, I couldn't resist....

[redacted] *Dear MRR—*
I'm writing this letter out of sheer frustration. It's not something I would normally do, but I feel like anyone who orders punk records should be aware of this problem. My beef is with Hardcore Holocaust mail order. For the second time, I am experiencing extreme frustration at paying for orders which either are not shipped or take much longer than necessary to ship. I will elaborate:

My first bad experience was in 2009, if I am correct. Both my roommate and I made orders from HH. We paid online with Paypal, which means HH got their money right away. The e-commerce sent an email right away, indicating that they received my money and order. We waited more than a month, and after sending emails that were not responded to, I had to call long distance twice, from Halifax (in Canada) to Texas at my own expense. I was assured, once the records were finally mailed, that it was an isolated incident. After two and a half months, we finally got our records. Being a forgiving person, and understanding that running a punk label and distro is difficult, I decided that I would order again, as did my roommate.

In January of this year (2011), I made two orders a few weeks apart, and my roommate made another order. My first order was on January 9th. It is now Feb 26th. I have sent two emails so far and my roommate has sent one. Neither of us have

received a response. I have resorted to calling again, but haven't received an answer. No one answers the phone and the voicemail inbox is full. In the event that we do receive our records, which would, you know, be great, it will be close to three months from the order date until we receive them. I have been ordering records for years, and I have never had to wait that long for three records. Havoc, Dr. Strange, Feral Ward, the list can go on for while of mail orders that are reliable and timely in their service, mail orders I have purchased records from in the past, so I have some precedence to rely on.

I am a student and my roommate doesn't make a lot of money, so we kind of enjoy having the records we do have the money to buy to arrive on time, or at all. Most people do. The fact that someone running a mail order doesn't even respond to emails is completely unacceptable as far as I'm concerned. Also, the fact that I have to call long distance at my own expense *again*, just to have the records mailed is even more unacceptable. I made an order from Feral Ward two weeks after making the order from HH and he records have been on my player for two weeks now. I am going to end up with another long distance bill just to get the records shipped.

It is beyond me how HH has maintained enough of a client base to even afford the domain for their mail order if they have such poor standards of service. I might have been naïve to make a second order, but I guess I treat punk like a good ol' boys club sometimes, which admittedly disappoints me more often than rewarding me. All I want is my records, records I can barely afford to buy. Records I paid for using Paypal money I waited two weeks to clear from my bank account. Unless I get a lot of free swag in my order, and maybe even despite that, this will be the last time I order from HH. I also want to warn anyone who is contemplating it to think twice. I can't be sure this will be printed, and if it is, I might have the records by then, but even if I do, it will have been long enough and frustrating enough to justify making my problem available for public consumption.
—Matt Hargrove
PS Ted Rall writes awesome columns and the inclusion of a lengthy and diverse discourse on religion in the past few issues has been stimulating.

Yeah, we have gotten lots of letters about this guy. Actually, he owes MRR *money as well. Don't let this asshole discourage you! You said yourself that Havoc, Dr. Strange, Feral Ward and other punk distros have come through. I hope you get your records and hopefully your letter will prevent other punks from being swindled.*
—Mariam

[redacted] *Hi Layla, Merm, MRR shitworkers and readers,—*

I was pleasantly surprised to see a guest column appear next to my film column in the latest issue #335. However I found it odd that Craigums would chose to review the film *Open Your Mouth and Say...Mr. Chi Pig* since I had previously reviewed it in issue #325. Then I noticed the sentence toward the end of the review that stated "...and we feel the adventure thus far has been adequately portrayed." I hope this is a typing error. If the "we" Craigums refers to includes him, I just have to say that is pretty lame. If Craigums worked on the film, he should not have reviewed it. I would hope *MRR* shitworkers would have more veracity than to promote their work in such a deceptive way.
—Carolyn Keddy

[redacted] *Dear MRR—*

Wow. I just finished reading the letter from "Bro-punk" in issue 335. I actually had to go back and re-read it two times because I literally just had a similar experience. I had written a note on a certain social network in an effort to reach out to other punk ladies/ radical women/female artists and general rad ladies I knew, encouraging them to participate more as a recognizable force with regard to shows, female empowerment, and working *together*. I received a response from perhaps the same "Bro-punk" attacking me and telling me I needed to "help build other girl's confidence and help them stop caring so much about what other men thought of them." Firstly, let me say how disgusted and appalled I was that I had somehow associated myself with someone who had such ass-backwards opinions. He proceeded to make a myriad of misinformed assumptions about myself and my other female friends, the general self-esteem level of most women, and many of the things you mentioned in the response letter in issue 335. I was so furious my blood boiled. I was then told that I should stop "complaining" about the "macho-punkisforfuckingdudes" attitude and book shows myself. I have been booking shows for two years on and off, and I have dealt with my fair share of people that wanted to put me down and discourage me. I continue to deal with it. *Daily*. I tried to shed some light on the situation and address some of the utterly asinine statements that were made in an effort to try and help this person understand why females might have these feelings. I was completely disregarded, and attacked again three more times.

I won't get into the "he said/she said" of it but suffice it to say it is the age-old argument most every female in punk has dealt with before. It was sad, it was frustrating, it made me want to drive to his house and kick his ass. The bottom line is, we, as punks need to make it clear that this type of behavior is not OK and will *not* be tolerated. Punk is supposed to be about not giving a fuck, not fitting into someone's idea of what is "*cool*" or "*acceptable*" and generally having fun. I am finding that there are *a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot* of people that do not feel the same. Speaking of which, I had a particularly offensive experience in Boston over the summer with some friends. We literally had another "punk" come up to us, hand us a flyer, make a rude remark about the type of punk he assumed we listened to, then walked away. Has it really gotten to that level where we have turned against one another? Apparently so... This is even sadder. I don't know how to express my opinions about this while being concise, so I will just say this. When did we become our own enemies? When did punk stop being about what was wrong with the world and start being a fucking sexist fashion show?

Basically, I just wanted to say *Right On* for publishing that dialogue. It is something I have recent direct experience with and it sucks really fucking bad to see how much it is a part of the fabric of our subculture. I am trying to exist as a female in punk in a formidable way and that seems to make a lot of people uncomfortable. If they think that's bad, just wait till they see the zine my lady friends and I are making...
Disgusted Upstate,
—C

[redacted] *Dear Layla—*

It's bro-punk, from last issue. I've read your response to my letter a few times over now (just got my mag in yesterday) and I gotta say I agree with everything you said. Like, fist-in-the-air-while-reading shit. But then I remembered that *I* wrote the original letter, and started to feel like an asshole. A couple of things I wanted to touch on:

I really, *really*, should not have referred to my friend as a "chick" who is "just"-anything. That *was* pretty dismissive, and while I know she wouldn't object to "chick" in person, that means fuck-all here in print. My bad. However one thing I think was a little unfair (and this is the only time I'll whine about "unfair," given the topic at hand) was the idea you put forth, repeatedly, that I was in some way drawing comparisons between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" punks—or that some people need to "learn" or "be taught" how to be punk. I do not feel that way at all, nor did I include, intentionally at least, anything to that effect in my letter. Sure, I mentioned that there are people who are "actually doing things," but only to highlight the disparity in effectiveness of talk vs. action.

Also, the Propagandhi thing was a joke, but it's worth mentioning that that's where *I* learned the definition of Patricentricity, and that it is a real thing. Anyways.

So I see now that this is *my* fault for attenuating certain points the way I did (*"I'm not going to argue that"*...), but I do not for one minute deny the ramifications of patriarchy in the punk scene. After reading my letter back a few times now, I get how I come off as only "slightly" acknowledging it, though. Seriously, that's my fault. I shouldn't have been so brief there, and in retrospect, *that* should have been the primary focus of my original letter. The reason I cut that bit so short is that that's my starting point; this shit is right in front of anyone's face and is everywhere I look. The scene is wholly dominated by men, serves only male interests, and not only disenfranchises women, but in fact *harms* many or most.

That fucking sucks, and *I do* want to change that. Again, I'm not saying that if a female punk is dissatisfied (or fucking *pissed*!) and chooses to keep her distance, that she "isn't really punk" or is "less punk" or is fucking up in any way. What I'm saying is that if she wants to see it change, and improve, then *we need her help*!

The *"not enough chicks"* and *"free lessons"* quips I included in the original letter are actual things I've heard dudes say. Maybe they were being sincere and really cared, or maybe they were

trying to get laid. I don't know. But as someone who does give a shit, and empathizes, I know *exactly* how it can sound.

Furthermore, the minority of men who *do* recognize this crap, *and* want to change it, *aaaand* are actually *willing* to, can't just step in and "save things." Even if we were capable of putting a stop to all the bullshit (which we aren't, alone), it's not any better for guys to jump in and supposedly make everything safe for the women. That chivalry bullshit is just as sexist as chauvinism (some would even argue that they are the same thing) and is predicated on the notion that women are weak, incapable, inferior, and need big, brave, strong men to keep them safe and do things *for* them. Fuuuuuuck that.

Once more, I am *not* saying that a handful of men just *recognizing* this stuff is any way doing enough. If we are truly committed to challenging sexism and patriarchy, to an equitable community, and really down for our punk sisters, then we have *a lot* of work to do. It starts with talking to women, *listening* to them, and using that male privilege to call out other dudes, even (more so, even) when they end up being our friends, roommates, bandmates, etc.

We have to continue to let people know we don't accept their fucked up language and the attitudes it indicates ("slut," "bitch," "cunt," "pussy," "faggot," etc…). We have to continue to be not accepting and straight up non-inclusive of stories and conversations about sex or sexuality that are demeaning or threatening. We have to continue to remind macho-moshers that there are people in the pit who are half their size trying to enjoy the show. The list of stuff we need to watch out for and do is long, and I'm not trying to dismiss or undermine any of it.

If we all work, as punks, to improve punk, we have a shot. But no one group can be the vanguard here; it's very much a team effort. Which means we have to start playing on the same team.
—trying-not-to-be-a-bro-punk

PS I would very much like to read that Sharon Cheslow interview. If you have a digital copy, please send it my way. Otherwise I can order the back-issue. Also, any good literature addressing this subject would be appreciated. Maybe my next letter can be more constructive.

The Sharon Cheslow interview is in MRR #298, and if you do an internet search with the words Sharon Cheslow interview I am pretty sure it comes up in full.

Honestly after rereading this letter, I find it hard to believe it's from the same person as your last. I guess to reiterate what I said last month, you can't make women do things they don't want to do "for the good of the scene." It's frustrating when female punks drop out, tired and sick of dealing with what can be a misogynistic and unwelcoming environment. When our intentions and ideas are constantly belittled and undermined, seen as inauthentic or just some feminazi on the rag it's hard to keep DIYing. Not to say that female punks all wither away because they "can't take the heat." Tim Yohannon used to say that women would make good coordinators of MRR because of all the shit we endure. The women who can stick it out have been through a lot so they can handle anything. But sometimes, you don't feel like having an argument with some random bro-punk who is totally unaware of his privilege and, citing a recent example asserts "equal rights, equal fights" not willing to comprehend that it has different ramifications when a man punches a woman than when a man punches another man. According to the UN, six out of every ten women experiences violence, to the point that the World Bank has deemed violence against women more dangerous than cancer and malaria and car accidents combined.

Who wants to spend their lives "educating" disrespectful clowns when you would, for example, way rather be watching the band, or hnging out with your friends… It's not fair that just because of my gender I am expected to spend a substantial part of my punk-life "educating" morons about fucked up sexist behavior, policing comments and conversations. I could just "relax" and "get over it" but… wait I can't. This is the gift I get for being female, and yes, a feminist And it keeps giving, inside and outside, of this subculture we call punk rock. I sort of didn't know how to respond to your letter; on one hand I was glad to see it demonstrated a thoughtful side of the "bro-punk" that wrote the letter in the last issue. On the other hand, I don't have the answers on how to go about getting girls involved in punk, let alone fixing sexism. It sounds like you are figuring shit out for yourself, and maybe when more bro-punks do that more lady punks will be there.

There are columns in the magazine this month, and as well as writing in the letters section about this subject, and if you are reading this and have something to say about it, send it in! We can't guarantee we will run everything, but all of our content is sent in by readers.
—Layla

[redacted]

Dear Mariam—
Thanks for such a gutsy review of my zine, *Hotshower* 12. To date I have not had such a visceral and negative reaction to my work. I appreciate this from you and plan to use your response as a springboard for my future work.
Cheers,
—Josh White

No Problem, Josh. You think that review was negative? Where are you from, hahah… Thanks for providing much fodder for my reviewing duties and a good laugh. Good luck to you and your dick.
Gutsy female,
—Mariam

[redacted]

Hey MRR—
I am writing this letter to follow up about the new DIY warehouse venue you mentioned in the Washington, DC scene report last issue. It is called Hole in the Sky. The place has been kicking ass since last summer, and has really helped strengthen the energy and vibes coming out of the DC punk community. However, stuff got sticky recently when the fire marshal decided to do a sweep of the neighborhood's venues. There were issues with permits and regulations, and they had to shut down a show and make the HITS chill out for a couple months. It really blew.

Luckily everything has turned out to be solvable, and the place will be back in business starting in June. Should the HITS have known better? Maybe, but to quote some local heroes, "at least we're fucking trying, what the fuck have you done?" With that said, everyone is looking forward to a great summer of all ages DIY shows at HITS.

After finishing necessary renovations, money is tight, so if anyone happens to be sitting on some extra cash there is a donation fund at www.holeintheskydc.org they'll even hook you up with some swag! If you're interested in playing at HITS, shoot an email to the guys and gals at holeintheskydc@gmail.com.
—Daniel

You mean you guys actually raised money yourselves and with the help of other punks to keep a DIY venue going? The hell you say! Here you go, naysayers… non corporate DIY in action. Glad you got your space back in action!
—Mariam

[redacted]

Dear MRR—
My name is Ayla. I interviewed a Sacramento hardcore punk band for my school newspaper and I don't think that any kids there will enjoy it so maybe you will.
Thanks,
—Ayla
PS love *MRR*!

What kind of music do you play?
Joe: Bad, fast, sloppy.
Nick: I agree.
How did you get the name a Fist Full of Freaks?
Josh: well I originally thought of Forceful Persuasion, but Nick and Jessie thought it sounded like rape. So then I came up with a Fist Full of Carnies and they didn't like that either so F.F.F. happened.
Where was your first show?
Joe: Here (Casa de Chaos).
Is there someone who writes your songs, or do you write them together?
Josh: Well, I write the lyrics and the music happens in my head. So Joe learns the guitar and teaches it to Nick.
Tell me about your song "Zombie Jesus."
Josh: It's about Easter: the celebration of Jesus returning from the dead to brain wash everyone with religion.
Do you really think that Jesus is a zombie?
Joe: Yes, we think he's a zombie. There are actually pictures of people sticking their fingers inside his ribs and stuff. And I don't think they would be fingering his ribs if he wasn't dead and then he came back from the dead. So yes, he's a zombie.
Do you think that Jesus wants to eat your brains?
Joe: Yes. He's a zombie. Zombies eat your brains.
It says on your website that you are anti-hate. What do you mean by that?
Josh: We hate people who hate others for anything except legitimate reasons. Like you can hate someone because they annoy you but not because they are black.
How long do you plan on playing shows?Nick: Untill we die hopefully.
Josh: Forever.

COLUMNS

SHE'S OVER IT

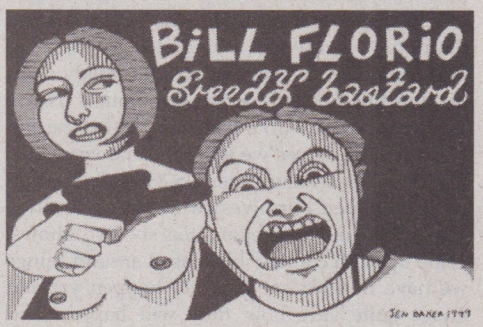
BY BRONTEZ

To what extent do you get involved and to what extant do just let shit go? My mind instantly flashes to about a million scenarios—Rodney King, Oscar Grant, the Richmond gang rape case, etc, (there's about a million and one I'm not naming). Here were situations where to a certain extent it was about crowd participation, with Rodney and Oscar it was both political and definitive to who ever decided to press "record" on the video camera and show the world what cops can get away with, in the Richmond case it was nightmarish realization that we live in a world where people can be cavalier in the face of the unthinkable. There is this mode of human thinking where people always want to hang back in a crowd—like the craziest shit can be happening but the mode of thinking always seems to be "this isn't *my* problem, if no one else is reacting I'm not gonna react"—this is how horrible shit happens, seriously. But there is something to be said for maybe making more "passive" actions to protest someone being fucked with—like maybe calling the cops from your cell phone. It's all very case by case but I'm always wondering if that could be enough, but obviously and unfortunately sometimes it has to be.

Long story short my step-father was a pretty violent man. Really violent. There's no need to go into all of it. As a child growing up in this situation I saw things go on in my house that made me feel like I was cursed by God, and was being fucked with specifically, but the second I ran away from home and talked to other punks I began to see the common thread of our existence. You grow up in some shitty Mid-American hell hole. Your dad is violent but he makes *waaay* more money than your mom so all his bullshit gets to hang out. (Thanks patriarchy!) You grow up feeling inferior, fucked with, and with a chip on your shoulder and the more you take in about the reality around you the chip gets bigger and bigger. One day I learned that I needn't cry over this (or cry more?) cause I can think of about 100 different people where this skeletal framework was happening in their homes too—shaping us. I remember growing up wanting access to guns and money (i.e. "safety") even though guns kinda scared me and money was (and is still) very elusive. The thing about punks/freaks in general is that we were the first to realize that things were terribly wrong. We had all through very hard means got the "cosmic clue" the world was handing us (i.e. *shit is fuuuuuuuuked up. girl-better pick a battle stategy now!*). Or rather some of us did. It's still funny how even in the punk bubble how many "well-adjusted" people walk among us. I can't *begin* to explain how many ex-friends/bandmates/roomates etc who even after they've known me for most of my life and my continuing struggle still had the gall to ask "why are you so angry?" But I digress....

I remember my family was sitting at Wendy's eating when a fight erupted between my mom and step-dad. Something that started stupid (as always) and was going to end violently (as usual) I was holding my little sister waiting for something horrible to happen (I always had this inner anxiety that they would kill each other) when for one of the only times I can remember, help came. There was this big white body builder lady eating with her daughter at a table behind us. They continued to fight out side and the woman intervened—she pulled out a cell phone, (which I remember thinking was weird-it was about a good twelve years before the cell "boom") and offered to stay with us till the cops came. I remember being in such a weird headspace. My step dad had gotten away with so much for so long that I don't think it ever really occurred to me that me and mom and sister were worth protecting. Sad. I do feel inclined to comment again on race and class here. My aunts and uncles stayed away from my parent's violent relationship. It was so frequent I don't really blame them but also we lived in "the Fields" (where cotton was grown) and the relationship to the cops was dismal. Every dispute where they got called they would come ask some questions, do nothing, and the cycle would continue. Now my step dad was pretty bold, if any of my aunts called the cops on him he wouldve fucked with them too *but* there was NO WAY he was gonna fuck with a white lady. In Alabama?!?!?!?!?!!? Oh please... *and* she was a body builder?!?!?!!? (which is funny cause he was on the short side). Even with the sheer tragedy of this story I cant help but laugh my ass off at these factors. I remembered it cause it was on of the few times I can recall a stranger coming to the rescue.

It was a couple of weeks ago and I was on BART when this *huge* guy started fucking with his female companion. It was not something you could ignore cause he was yelling. I remember it was me and this hippie boy who kept looking at each other like "should we check this fool?" Everyone else was ignoring it. He grabbed her hard and I saw the hippie boy jump up and I've hated on hippies in the past but I was *glad* to see that motherfucker. I jumped up with him. Now I am *not* a tough person. I have intense anxiety in physical situations, I stop short and have been too scared to fight back more times than I like to admit *but* I knew despite all that this was the one day in my life I wasn't having that shit. The hippie boy (who was actually kind of cute now that I think about it) sat to seat adjacently and I just asked the guy "why are you yelling at this woman? Is everything okay?" That pissed him off *plenty* and he started yelling at me (whiskey shot in hand—he seemed blacked out) and he was about 50lbs more muscle than me and taller and I kept saying this prayer over in my head "he may hit me once but I'll fuck him up with my bike lock (3x)." Before thought could turn to action, we pulled up to 12th St and a cop walked on the car and up to us and I remember it being one of the few precious times I was actually happy to see a cop.



MOST FUCKED UP TOUR PART 2

Last month I recapped the past 18 months that I've been part of a monthly comedy show at the UCB Theater in New York. I felt it necessary to drag this out a bit to get an idea of what it's about and why I sort of fit in with one aspect of the stupidity involved. People getting electric shocks, people donating money in order to see a man eat a hot dog out of another man's ass etc. In this half of it, I want to try to get to the other half of the stupidity, as I've discovered that people outside of music can be equally dedicated to a hopeless meaningless cause, a sort of quasi-spirituality that I see in a lot of things punk rock people perform, spiel and live by.

So picking up where I left off, in the Spring of

2010 the show starts getting a little more spectacle like, talk of driving entire crowds of people across state lines, perhaps blindfolded, crashing rented vehicles, squeezing 100 people into an apartment with a television crew etc. Then there is a four month period where Chris Gethard, the person giving his name to the show, gets a real job and then doesn't get a real job. At this point Chris emails us,

"We'll send updates every day on our progress from the road via the internet—blogs, video, twitter, all that bullshit. People will quickly come to realize that it's totally real… We'd look for opportunities on the road to visit strange places, meet strange people, pull off bits in small weird towns we go to along the way... It will kind of be a week long edition of the show… It's come to my attention that it is Wal-Mart corporate policy to allow RVs to park overnight in their parking lots. How funny would it be if we spent a week sleeping in the parking lots of different Wal-Marts together?"

Oh, I forgot to mention that over a year ago Chris decided that so many celebrities are on Twitter nowadays, one could use this near-direct connection to lure one of them to be a guest on the show. After Al Roker declines on Christmas Eve mere hours after dozens make a plea, it's decided that Sean Combs / PDiddy should be the target for the show's fans to start electronically nagging with a character limit ceiling of 140.

So, the initial idea of driving to LA and doing an episode of the show at the UCB theater there, is now expanded, not only are we going to have people's tweets decide the route the RV will travel, but we're going to raise money for the trip by allowing people to get us to perform any task at any location within the continental US for $500. Except for some dude who paid to have a Baltimore sandwich delivered to him in California, the $500 donors are all comedy clubs making this not only a trip that entails us following social networking streams, but at the end of those long drives we will do some version of the live show in four other US cities. So basically we've given ourselves twelve days to drive some 5000 miles, prepare for six live shows, come up with comedy bits based around things we have no idea are going to happen yet and aren't quite sure how they will happen and somehow not all perish in some frozen river in the coldest winter in recorded history.

A couple of days before the show P Diddy calls up after Chris corners him backstage at *Saturday Night Live*, and explains he will do the show, he cannot be there on Saturday so we do some quick show swapping and create another original show just for him the day before we leave.

I'm not sure if I've clearly given you the gist of how all this works, but I'm hoping you understand that this all takes a lot of hard work, and it also takes a lot of planning, but ultimately, it's not planned! This isn't like a band where you rehearse and you write original material or you cover songs by other bands. This is basically just setting things up where you have a good possibility of something funny happening and then just winging it. A lot of this is dependent on random people just being random, and hopefully something will happen that will either be outright funny, or be so uncomfortably terrible that it will be so much of a disaster that it comes out funny. Anything in-between is somewhat just terrible.

So, for two weeks twelve people didn't sleep or bathe and ran around like headless chickens. Endless hours of video were shot for a few dozen YouTube videos. The RV crashed into a pole in an empty Wal-Mart parking lot and a parked car on a street in LA. If you check out www.thechrisgethardshow.com you can see all the documentation including a blog Chris did that I feel more accurately explains everything that went on.

Every morning we woke up in a freezing cold parking lot and basically the comedians running this show would try to figure out how they were going to fill the day. There wasn't an outline or a real idea or anything really prepared beforehand, they'd just look at the twitter feed for #AmericaGethard and go from there. Anyone else would have had something to go by, but I felt it was some sort of unwritten rule that pulling some sort of prefabricated bit out would have went against some sort of invisible guidelines that these folks put upon themselves. While I can appreciate having this sort of ethics based on nothing, coming from nowhere being on this trip in a self-deprived state for a long period of time got me to think a lot about life in general. Why would people put themselves in such a situation just to get a few laughs? Many people do these things as part of a culture, take Italians or Greeks, they enjoy pain in the ass traditions based on zero common sense because it's just the way you do things. These people don't have something as inbred as being Italian or Greek to blame for deciding they are going to drive all night, sleep for two hours and then spend yet another day trying to make a funny YouTube video while needing to get to a destination 700 miles away by dusk.

Now while I can't say I've ever been exposed to this sort of insanity before, the truth is we all have. The truth is, punk rock isn't quite like other music. When you go to a show, you do expect some level of randomness, something other than just a band playing songs that you've listened to on your IPod or may want to listen to on your IPod in the future. Personally I expect some sort of audience drama, be it a fight or outward drunken stupidity or random drama, and I expect the same from the bands playing. There could be some dude that insists on talking into the microphone the whole time a band isn't playing or maybe just loads of shit-talking, food throwing or general chaos for no apparent reason. The next minute someone can get up on stage and talk about something serious and get an emotional reaction in one way or another. But when you take a step back or if you bring someone into it from the outside, is there really any reason we should have these expectations?

The funny thing about Chris Gethard is he seems to like to take a little from each world and bring it together to make something on a higher level of annoying and brilliance than either world by itself. I personally really hope he succeeds at being appreciated for what he does, but like a lot of us, he'd probably be happy just living it while it lasts.

Hit me up bill@candids.com

Sun on my face and frozen wind in my eyes. This is springtime in London, and I'm fully aware of this persistent tendency I have to open every column with some pithy and not-altogether necessary comment on the weather. Soz for that. Brain is everywhere, facts is nowhere. Today I started a proper job in a good museum. Yesterday I was in a national newspaper, looking weirdly tuffstyles/urban (the photographer kept asking us to look moody) in relation to an anti-street harassment project that a friend and I co-run. It's been weird—I think my Dad was a bit freaked out that my first ever in-print quote (outside of beloved thing you hold in your hands, cuz whatwedoissecrettt, duh) included the phrase "Nice Tits," but he was still proud, I think. It's deeply strange cos the issue of the newspaper in question was guest edited by Annie Lennox—formerly of '80s UK androdge/anodyne '80s synthsters Eurythmics, now mostly known for being an "acceptable" feminist and a bit of a posh Scot. The soundtrack of all of my childhood journeys crammed in the back of our ailing Mazda 626 long before I could see over the dashboard, in particular (which is even weirder) a creepy banger of a song called "Sex Crime" which my sister always told me off for singing along to even with my extreme lisp that rendered it more like Theckth Cwime. The world turns on a strangest axis.

New band jumped on the second day a two-day women's rights benefit staged at a anarchist social centre that's something of a quasi-institution in the north of England, where the criteria for the fest that weekend was that all bands booked had to have at least one woman member. I thought it sounded cool even though the bands would not all be to my taste (going by the "organic dub ska" descriptions anyway.) There had been some revealing intra-band bickering over whether playing a gig based on these criteria in fact serves only to further ghettoise and patronise female musicians, and that putting on gigs should only ever be rationalised on the basis of the bands being musically "good." I feel pretty diametrically the opposite to said viewpoint, perhaps predictably so, and we talked about this, but as is always the case with two strong minded people who know each other very well, it's almost impossible to really change opinions, especially when it's a dude and thus even harder to explain the innate value and

secret sort of magic of being surrounded by women in an environment that's in the UK punk scene gotta be normally at least 95% male. To me, the ideal musical punksphere is loads of totally amazing bands that are full of dudes *and* ladies, so in making a space that albeit artificially enforces that gender balance as a reality, the organiser of the gig was practicing a neat-o experiment in prefigurative politics. That all the bands didn't suit my tastes obviously means it's less enjoyable for me than it otherwise might have been, but when was the last time every band on a fest did, and it seems that in creating a situation where the focus is on women actually being *in* the bands, members of the audience might be inspired to start some that don't suck, too. (Sidepoint: I feel like I constantly have to reinforce how rare mixed gender bands are in the UK, for *MRR*'s international audience that might think I'm being a nitpicking harpy, but seriously, this island's a cock forest like you've never seen before, especially in hardcore.)

This discussion having taken place before the gig itself, I didn't know what to expect really. As a new band still very much finding our proverbial feet, we hadn't had these kinds of conversations, really, and suddenly after playing we found ourselves sitting in the newly refurbished roof of the 1 in 12 being interviewed for a radio show about these very topics by a rad girl who's name I think was Jen. I had sat with her and some other girls that I knew and did not know and realised that intentionally or otherwise the organisers of the cringingly named Equal Fest had done something special because here was rad fun time camaraderie and failed skateboard dream talks for real—and no one was talking about knitting tampons either. Her radio show was on something called BCB anyway. The presence of a Dictaphone and a stranger can be a very calming thing amongst a group of fiery personalities, I learnt. Everyone stared at the floor and we speak in low tones with more implicit respect than we might normally show in more casual times when less seems at stake but actually its more), and with a special lack of certainty that shoots big holes of possibility into the walls people usually carry around ready to erect at the first sign of a conflicting idea because oh but aren't you meant to agree with every aspect of your band mates' outlook just by virtue of playing in time with them? (as cruel and unusual punk rock assumptions, that one is up there.) Yeah, the enduring myth of a band having one cohesive idea about everything… after all, Nation of Ulysses we ain't (mores the endless pity) and while beautifully written '90s punk rock cryptomythologies were oh so sexy and alluring (well, maybe, I sure get off on that shit, I don't know, don't we all wanna be the UFO dictator of our own secret cadre of libidinal hipbone revolutionary aesthetes?) but back in theee IRL that shit can't ever really ring true unless only one of you speaks or matters or you're all on drugs or something. As Ashleigh said as we climbed the rickety stairs out of the attic, having committed our sometimes wildly conflicting ideas on the subject to tape with accidental communal grace and really not too much of a stuttering… "Wow, that was cleansing."

Later that evening, we travelled to another different anarchist social centre in a different post-industrial Yorkshire town (wild, right?), to play a club night put on by the charming hep cats responsible for *Niche Homo* fanzine. We had the South African contingent with us, so Glenn and the Moolmans play a killer Black Mamba Beat set, then Andrew jumps up and Matthew from Black Time appears like a skulking puzzled panther from the infinite haze of his own mystique/hair. Their band Wake Up Dead played a quick set, belting out Misfits/Gun club style bangers including a paean to Andrew's Mancunian girlfriend, titled "Northern Girls." I notice a woman is gyrating wildly and gesticulating in a way that's inscrutable but a little bit unsettling. She keeps grabbing at his mic stand, and standing a little too close. Still, she seems to love it. The euphoria of a lightning speed set over, suddenly I'm grimacing and looking away as this woman, limbs all loosened and out of sync, high either on the ecstasy of presumed righteousness or the cheap speed you can get up there, or both, grabs the mic and begins to ramble she-thinks-authoritatively yet without any consonants, something about patriarchy, lambasting Andrew directly seemingly on behalf of all real "Northern girls" as "oppressed women." I die inside, knowing that this person's choice to be wastehammered, mean and rude, producing an incoherent ramble clearly with the intent to publicly shame instead of directly engage with her perverse argument, will sit neatly in the column of crazies stacking up against logical feminist human punkers everywhere. GAH. Battles picked and lost. Later on, someone will scrawl "Equal Fest = Tokenism" with a jizzing cock motif on the dancefloor in fat chalk letters. I'm too drunk to work out who did it and what they were even driving at. I pour beer over the cock anyway. Within mere minutes, frenetic dancing shoes return it all to a random distribution of meaningless dust anyway. I'm nursing a finger swollen and red from an ill-judged guitar playing/stabbing angle. Unsure now from where the blood is coming, but nonetheless delirium drunk with the only saints I know, we just keep moving and it feels alright.

So here I am, sitting in this fucking apartment. The one that used to belong to my Mom and Nick. My mother and stepfather.

It's a "cozy" two bedroom place on Bank Street. Near the water. In New York City. Manhattan.

My mom had put me, Nick and herself on the list to get into this place in the late seventies. It's middle income housing, well, was. Mitchell Lama housing they called it.

If you made a certain amount of money while working and living in New York City, you could apply. The waiting lists were long and it took ten years to get into this place.

To my mom, the wait was well worth it. The basement we had been living in on West Fourth Street had long been outgrown, and my mom deserved to live somewhere where she could see green out her windows, not people's feet on the sidewalk above.

It took ten years to get the place. Ten long years of waiting, sweating out a landlord who never gave leases, and the looming threat of leaving the borough at any moment because in reality, middle income does not exist in New York City.

Ten Years.

Finally, the notice comes in the mail, and almost a year later, we are in. My mom finally has a two-bedroom apartment in the West Village. No more basements. No more studio. No more rats knawing through steel reinforced plates behind the stove, or fights between the beasts beneath the bathtub, or in the walls that got so loud Nick had to poison them.

Then they stink up the place for weeks on end.

No more of any of that.

A first floor walk up on Bank Street. A street Nick used to have his Chiropractor office on, until he gave up one day because "taking care of sick people just wasn't my thing."

There was plenty of space for all three of us, and although I did spend most of the time with my girlfriend who later became my future ex-wife on Carmine Street, I did stay here quite a bit as well.

We began anew, starting a new narrative in our new apartment.

Unfortunately, the story turned from one of glee to one of gloom and doom within six months of getting the keys.

It started with a jaw ache that wouldn't go away.

Turns out after many doctor and dentist visits that it was something called "referred pain."

My mom had lung cancer.

The bad kind.

Stage 4-B.

It had spread throughout her body by the time she was diagnosed and most doctors agreed she wouldn't live more than eleven months.

I hated that they were right.

***

Now it's eighteen years later.

Eighteen years which seem like last week.

I can still smell my mom in this place, and some of her blouses still hang in the hallway closet.

Nick and I are pussies and can't take it upon ourselves to throw them away. I'm not sure that's the right thing to do, anyway.

I'm not sure about anything.

Not even sure I'm really here.

On Bank Street.

In my dreams, I'm always searching for my

home in either Greenwich Connecticut, or the Plantation in Tallahassee Florida.

I usually end up finding a combination of the two. Water Oak Plantation in Greenwich, Connecticut.

It's on the border of Greenwich and Stamford, like our old house used to be. But the only way to get there is through a maze of underground homes and industrial hallways that always lead me to the same place.

Once I see my father there, I usually beg him to stop being so angry with me and stop beating me. He's gigantic, and his huge hand just swats me backward as he laughs.

I beg, I plead with him about his rage. I tell him that a year after my mother passes away, he does as well. From a massive heart attack.

From rage.

He just laughs at me and tells me he's glad the whore is finally dead.

I get so angry I try to run back to the city. To Bank Street.

Here.

But I can't find it.

It's not where it's supposed to be. There are dirt fields with bare trees and abandoned housing projects instead.

I cry. I always do.

I can't find home.

Ever.

***

Until about a year ago, I had all my belongings in boxes out here in the living room. They were dusty and the shipping labels from Phoenix to New York City were still all over everything.

I hadn't bothered to unpack since losing my wife almost five years ago.

Why should I?

This wasn't home.

The last couple of places weren't, either.

It was easier to live out of suitcases and be ready to run then to unpack my stuff and lay claim to an apartment I'm still not sure I even belong in. Or will be allowed to stay in.

Everything is so fucked up.

Since my mother died, the thread that held the world together slowly evaporated.

Right now all my "stuff" is in one of the back bedrooms, along with Nick's tools, photo stuff, and art stuff.

I sleep on a mattress on the floor of my parent's old bedroom.

Their mattress.

I won't sleep on the bed frame because the backboard is a cutout Nick made of my mom's naked body.

Although he is basically living in California, with my brother, Luke, he insists I keep the bed. I've honored his wish, and have kept almost all his stuff.

He's over eighty now. I doubt he'll even get a chance to use this garbage ever again. But he wants it.

And who am I to throw it away?

I'm just a guest.

Not even on the lease, because Nick "forgot" to put me on it. So if he passes away or sells it since it went condo, I'm out on the street.

I'm just a visitor in my parent's home.

But more importantly, for almost the past decade, a visitor on this earth.

Or at least that's how I've felt since ten years ago this September.

End Of Part One.

Take My Life, Please.

1.New Dwarves album due out in May called "*The Dwarves Are Reborn*". Since I'm not sure it is proper to review it, just yet, I'll preview it by saying it's right up there with their recent efforts in that it's the *best* punk rock there is on the face of the planet these days. One song, "15 Minutes," is amazing. Actually, they all are amazing. This album will not disappoint...and great for old Dwarves fans or new ones just getting into the band. This is my favorite band still in existence. Get this the day it comes out. Seriously. The best album to come out in years.

2. Speaking of new albums, "The Blood Runners" from New York City finally put out their first record. The singer is Paul Ryder. Like I keep saying, he is Stiv and Iggy reborn. I'll wait to really review this, too, until next month, as I'm not sure it's available yet. If it is, get it. Second best band in the world next to the Dwarves!

3. Happy Spring, everyone! Enough of that winter, huh?

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

STRAIGHTJACKET NATION's last show in South East Asia was tucked away in a pretty unassuming building painted in a color somewhere between lime and cream (crime?), evoking images of Kubrick's *Clockwork Orange*. It was a few stories up, between a couple of non-descript rooms that could have been residential or office space. A rehearsal studio full of crusty punks, an anomalous sight in a country that I'd entered only hours before. The streets of Malaysia and Indonesia were sweaty and had some grit; there was something in the sanctuary Singapore's antibacterial security that felt very alien after a couple of weeks away from the western world.

It was here that I met Emmanuel from Delusion of Terror Records, and after taking me to task about my poor internet correspondence, a warranted criticism, he schooled me on some great punk hits and urged me to dig into the early '80s Filipino hardcore bands.

A couple of years later, STRAIGHTJACKET NATION played Malmö, Sweden, and the day after inflated the struggling economy of Scandinavia with more Australian financial assistance in the form of prowling record stores. Al managed to find a Lee Hazlewood record he'd been hunting all the way across the USA, I dug up a couple of really obscure DEATH IN JUNE and CURRENT 93 records and some beat up KINKS single, but the only punk record I could find was the despicable thrash of Canada's NUNFUCKERS. Then Dave dug out a copy of the *Nightmare* bootleg, "early hardcore from the Phillipines", and urged me to spend money, and hence the topic of this month's "All Foreign Junk."

On a label with the venerable title of Peace Punk Records, there's five bands: BETRAYED, R.D.A., I.O.V., PHIL. VIOLATORS and URBAN BANDITS. Distinctly American hardcore influenced, there's a great deal of comparisons to be made between the sordid styles offered on *Flex Your Head* and *Nightmare Vol.1*. Both compilations are full of hardcore bands that grew up on English punk; for example, BETRAYED offer a pretty convincing cover of the DAMNED's "Love Song" on one of the tracks pulled for this 7". It is a bootleg in that fantastic 1990s bootleg style: blank labels, hideous gouge through the matrix.

According to Emmanuel, who I quizzed about the compilation, "as far as I know the bootleg vinyl was inspired by the early Filipino HC punk compilation tape series *Rescue Ladders and Human Barricades* series, released by legendary independent punk label Twisted Red Cross which features bands like URBAN BANDITS, BETRAYED, PRIVATE STOCK, SEX MILITANTS, WUDS, ZOOT SUIT, etc."

SEX MILITANTS?! That one can go toe to toe with ANARCHY CONDOMS for my favourite band name that isn't YOUTH OF TODAY. Emmanuel also fed me a bunch of information on the early Filipino punk scene, including an informative piece titled "The First Wave of Pinoy Punk" that could probably be easily found with an internet connection and a little modern life. According to these scholars, these brave documentarians, in 1978 "a wave of wealthy teenage Pinoy expatriates brings punk to Philippine shores from Britain. Filipino punkdom, however, would derive most of its features from punk fanzines in the U.S." This certainly makes sense with the hardcore on this compilation.

Lemme offer to you a little back and forth between Emmanuel and I on the subject of this compilation:

What do you know about how this compilation came together?

When Yuki Asai's old band PEACEFUL PROTEST from Japan toured the Philippines back in January 1997 he got hold of some old reissued TRC tapes of early '80s Pinoy HC punk bands which flooded the scene during that time, story goes that he really liked it a lot and decide to compile all those songs he likes from those bands and decide to do a bootleg release in vinyl under his DIY label Peace Punk records. It's also his way of documenting the scene here since most of the HC punk bands here were totally unheard/unknown outside of the Philippines.

Were there any follow ups to the compilation?

There was supposed to be a follow up to that compilation which will feature other early Pinoy HC punk bands recordings but for some unknown reason that didn't pushed through but

from what I've gathered the record label folded up.

What was the response in the Philippines at the time?

There was a positive response in regards to the said release since it was one of the few instances/occasions wherein local HC punk bands was able to hit vinyl releases. However I heard that most of the bands that were included on the said bootleg EP were unaware of its existence and didn't get any copies, but most of them didn't give a shit about it anyway.

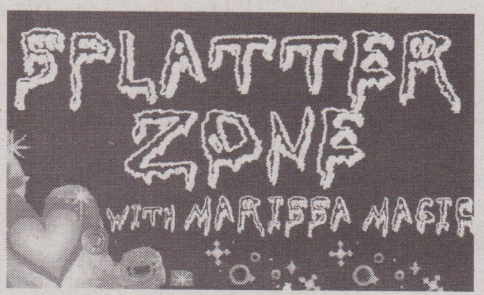
BETRAYED, as mentioned, have the harDCore sound down, American style ferocity and crudeness over British style sensibility, think of TEEN IDLES. R.D.A. are GANG GREEN styled spastic thrash hardcore with some really unsettling repetitive breaks. I.O.V. sound like *Boston Not LA* era JERRY'S KIDS, frantic hardcore, with an immortal, high class tune called "Yankee" that intros with a really stupid "Yankee Doodle" riff and the lyrics are pretty fuckin' hard: "Fuckin' Yankees went to town / Robbin' us clean and empty / stealin' our resources / killin' us more / and now they're takin' over." Following this is "School Violence" by PHILIPPINE VIOLATORS, which intros with another olde American civil war tune (don't know the name and I can't be fucked with knowing something like this), a song about killing teachers and similar in style and intent to I.O.V. URBAN BANDITS close the 7", direct harDCore again, UNTOUCHABLES teenage hate. All these bands obviously had access to recording equipment and someone who knew how to make hardcore sound hardcore: none of it sounds awkward or compromised, it's *loud*. Certainly, there is charm in the raw feedback dominated tape hiss of, for example, early Spanish hardcore, where you could tell they hadn't access to recording equipment and even if they did couldn't afford it or knew that they wouldn't be able to get the sound right, but these Filipino punks got a good deal, sir, when they stepped into the studio.

All the songs are taken from cassettes and sometimes are poorly mastered, so the sound quality jumps around a little. Perfect. The cover folds out to a large sheet with no information about the intent of the bootleg or the history of the bands. There are some lyrics and a couple of cassette covers and an interview with the PHILIPPINE VIOLATORS: "PHILIPPINE VIOLATORS started out way back in 1984, we were then regarded as a punk / hardcore band. During those days the scene is quite limited only to people who have a thorough knowledge of the scene and this is what it is all about. Today, I would say 80% of the people in the scene were (sic) just poseurs, they lack the attitude, THE REAL PUNK ATTITUDE" (capitalization all theirs). A world united by fear and hatred of the poseur is a real punk world, eh? There's a nice scrawl alongside the interview: "Who the fuck needs society? Maybe you but not me!" Hopefully a lyric excerpt? Unite against society! There is no insert aside from a catalogue from Peace Punk, which offers a few tasty slogans alongside AMEBIX bootlegs and the like: "FUCK YOUR NATIONALITY", "FRIENDSHIP! NOT WARSHIP" and "MAKE A PUNK POLITICAL AGAIN!!" are my choice picks.

It is 2011. There is such an exhaustive amount of access to information on the most obscure turds in the American or Swedish hardcore toilet. That illusive mystique that many crybabies bemoan about pre-internet hardcore is not worth too much paper and thought, but if you are the type to devote value to such mystique, records like *Nightmare Vol. 1* are a thing of the past and some insight into how the message of the hardcore reality was once spread. There are so many high class represses of Killed By Death / Hardcore records to be churned out in the next couple of years, including some records that I have never seen before that have already come into my hands (highly recommended are the Brisbane KBD punk of the Savage Music reissues on 540: BODY SNATCHERS, JUST URBAIN, YOUNG IDENTITIES).

While certainly of great merit, a record like *Nightmare Vol. 1* would probably be an unnecessary new release today. Bootleggers will most likely just upload nowadays and save themselves the hassles. The early hardcore scene of the Philippines will no doubt see a lot of interest in the next couple years as a consequence of the steady increase in attention towards '80s international hardcore, and someone will no doubt find these cassettes and give them a creditable release.

If you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, you are a true believer and can contact me: A FOREIGN JUNKIE AT PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA DOT COM Thanks Emmanuel.



AS A WOMAN THE GOP HATES ME.

It's really starting to feel like end times. If you haven't noticed, the fucking GOP hatred of women has been ramping up in the past couple months. It ranges from the absurd to well… the absurd. The big ticket right now, which by the time you are reading this has most likely been voted on, is a piece of legislation that would entirely defund Planned Parenthood. We've all had the experience (or at least known someone who has) of having two dollars to our names and needing birth control / a pap smear / an abortion / medical attention / whatever and relying on the fact that Planned Parenthood can provide us with those things on a sliding scale. The defunding of Planned Parenthood would (duh) hit poor women the hardest.

I know our collective dislike for authority has a tendency to manifest itself in a hands off approach a lot of the time. A refusal to work with the shitsystem. I get it, but at the same time I've said this before and I'll say it again, disengaging your voice makes the shit ring of the collective GOP's voice seem even louder. The rallying cry from the GOP is to defund Planned Parenthood because they provide abortion—and I will get to the ridiculousness and hatred inherent in an anti-choice stance, but really to want defund Planned Parenthood because of the abortion card doesn't make sense seeing as that is 3% of what they do. 3%! Three fucking percent. Oh, not to mention that the abortions provided by Planned Parenthood are not funded by federal money in the first fucking place. So, yes technically in a round about way but not really at all, taking away federal funding from Planned Parenthood will make it harder for them to provide abortions, but with that fucking round about blow comes a loss of so many things: birth control, STD screenings, breast exams, pap smears, the list goes on. Oh, and if you didn't know, a pap smear is a test for pre-cancerous cells—therefore women who can't afford this simple screening stand the risk of dying of cervical cancer. The fact that there are people in the world who believe that women dying because they can't afford a pap smear is better than federally funding an institution that also happens to provide abortions boggles my fucking mind and honestly should boggle everyone's fucking mind. Though it's real clear that this is about trying to limit access to abortion, the GOP is attempting to represent these cuts as a way to reduce the deficit. The fact that denying affordable and accessible health care to ladies, women and girls could somehow be deemed an area where funding could be cut again boggles my fucking mind and again should boggle everyone's fucking mind.

And really, being anti-choice is the stupidest fucking thing on the planet. One in three women will have an abortion in their lifetime, this plants abortion firmly on the grounds of a normal medical procedure, something that is in fact an ordinary part of women's reproductive health care needs. Not to mention that it's my fucking body. On top of that I really believe that anti-choicers are truly more interested in controlling women then saving fetuses. If they were really interested in ending abortions they should work to make birth control more accessible rather than less and on top of that make sex ed comprehensive rather than not have it because god will hate you or whatever. But really, I should be the only person in control of my uterus. Get the fuck out. For reals.

But guess what! The current flow of hatred towards women doesn't end there; the war on women doesn't end there. All that is only what is happening on a federal level. Recently, a bill in South Dakota would have made it legal to kill abortion providers, the wording has since been changed so it no longer legalizes murder but this was only done after a public outcry over it. Georgia introduced a bill that would reclassify "victims" as "accusers" for such heavily gendered crimes as rape, stalking, and domestic violence but wouldn't change the language for crimes like burglary or robbery. Already rape victims are continually discredited and generally not believed, this change in semantics would just

further that trend. Oh, and Georgia doesn't stop there. There is currently a bill working it's way through the system in Georgia that would illegalize miscarriage, meaning that a women could be charged with murder for having a fucking miscarriage, even worse Georgia is not alone on this, as of this writing there is an identical bill in Utah that is only waiting on a governor signature to become fucking law there. Ohio is currently holding debates on a piece of legislation dubbed the heartbeat bill, which would make abortion illegal if there is a detectable fetal heartbeat. Heartbeats can be detectable as early as nine weeks, interestingly enough before a fetus even really has a heart or blood to pump through it, along with this lots of women don't even know they are pregnant at nine weeks, thus essentially making abortion illegal. But, oh wait! It gets even better! Recently during debates on this bill a fucking *fetus* was brought in to testify. I shit you not, something that doesn't even possess a fucking mouth to speak with yet was brought in to testify in a fucking court of law. As in the court had a woman come in who was nine weeks pregnant to do a sonogram in court and demonstrate the fetal heartbeat at nine weeks (they couldn't find it, apparently it's really hard to find because, you know, it barely even exists at that point.)

Even just thinking about these things is a fucking nightmare but these things are fucking real. Everything I just talked about is a fucking fact. Even more terrifying is that these things could become actual legislation, not just things that might become our daily reality… no, even worse these things are fast on their way to becoming our daily fucking reality. The defunding of Planned Parenthood already passed the house, that's basically half way there. No more fucking around or being apathetic or even just taking shit for granted. While yr asleep at the wheel and rebelling against the US government by checking out and not participating the shit storm strikes even harder. The basic human right of having access to affordable basic health care is being taken away. This will result in women dying for no better reason than the republicans feel it's better to fund fucking NASCAR then provide health care for half the fucking population. As we fucking speak. Right now. This is why talking to your reps counts. This is why working to vote the reps that you want into the shit system counts. This is also why I hate the fucking government but I will not sit silently as they fucking get away with it.

Apparently, as winter slowly turns to spring, raw ponx everywhere are un-tuning their guitars and warming up their drinking arms because I have a shit ton of awesome new releases to talk about this month! Let's get straight into the thick of it with one of my most anticipated records of the year, a split between two of my live and recorded current favorites: D-CLONE and NEVERVESKADE! Pressed in advance of their joint Japanese tour (and goddamn, every bill on that tour is fucking stacked!) this is top-notch material from both. The NERVESKADE stuff is even a bit faster than their usual, and this is not throw-away stuff: "Total Isolation" is as good as anything I've heard from this band. Keeping all the *AAAAH*s you've come to expect but letting the bass lead and dropping some seriously awesome solo action in the mix as well. D-CLONE tricked me with an intro that's as fucking noise as anything I've ever heard, but follow with two more tracks of their trademark super high-energy ultra-distorted post-DISCLOSE d-beat attack. The bass break in "Mental Disorder"=you're throwing shit. D-CLONE are one of my top five favorite live bands ever, and I am dying of jealousy that the NERVESKADE boys have now been able to tour with them twice. Needless to say this is a must-have release, and kudos to Hardcore Survives label for putting it out (and with a swank mini-tour poster to boot). (Hardcore Survives, hcsurvives.exblog.jp/)

On that tour, I'm pretty sure they've got at least one gig booked with Osaka powerhouses LASTSENTENCE, whose new (second) demo just dropped. They've lost their singer, but none of their Scandi-worshiping power. This new material is still very much in the FRIGORA camp, drawing from Swedish classics like DISCARD and MOB 47, but adding a layer of Japanese-style distortion and shouted vocals. For the first time I can remember, they slow down a bit on a track that kind of reminds me of MOB 47's "Animal Liberation" (not exactly, as the drums are more busy but still...). It will probably take me a few more listens to be as down with this demo as I was with the earlier recordings, especially the EP, but a band as good as LASTSENTENCE shouldn't end due to the loss of just one member and I'm interested to hear what new directions they choose to go in. They're young, they're pissed and they're really fucking good at what they do, just don't come in expecting a carbon copy of the earlier material. (2-4-2-338 Honjyo Higashi, Kitaku, Osaka City 531-0074 Japan)

I was pretty much taken by surprise that there was a brand new EXITHIPPIES / ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION split. Fortunately I recovered my wits quickly enough to snag a copy! A couple of issues ago I was raving about ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION's debut EP and now I get more new material already. Of course, that's not to ignore the considerable powers of the EXITHIPPIES who bring some of the most straightforward hardcore material I've heard from them in quite a while. Of course, being who they are there are still a few power electronics moments, weird sound effects and enough distortion to make NOFX sound like CONFUSE. After a few listens, this may be a contender (against their side of the WANKYS split LP) for my favorite EXITHIPPIES material yet. Pure noise, without the self-indulgence of the *Record and Fantasy* recording, but with the sense of fun fully intact. Of course that sense of fun contrasts remarkably with gloomy crust merchants ATF, whose side picks up the pace a bit from the EP to deliver three blasts of total Brit-core worship. As always, this is spot on from the Mid-esque artwork to the tone to the buried vocals to the driving but never over-complicated riffs. If DOOM meets the slower parts of the *Scum* LP piques your interest you need to be checking out this band. I'm sure they're fun guys in person, but on record this is total apocalypse. (Doomed to Extinction Records, PO Box 22449, Oakland CA, 94609, distortba@hotmail.com)

While they're more than a bit outside my normal range of coverage, the track that THE SICK contributed to the *Tsuyama City HC* comp. prompted me to check out their new single, *Furusuinku* on Classick Records, and it is some catchy fucking shit. I guess these guys play their share of hardcore bills, but this is total pop-punk with a strong resemblance to the DUDOOS or CIGARETTEMAN with snotty TOY DOLLS-style vocals. Not raw, but definitely punk and a nice break from the usual ear-bleeding noize. Plus, there's cowbell and a wacky nautical theme. Every single thing on the sleeve is in Japanese, so hit them up at their site for a copy. (http://ip.tosp.co.jp/i.asp?i=thesick1985)

On the more noizy side of things, goddamn there's a new CHAOS DESTROY EP! And this one starts out with a sunny pop tune as well! Well, maybe not "pop" so much as "poop" but there's definitely a major scale riff buried until all the fuzz and filth anyway. Overall this has a bit of a brighter tone than the first EP or the magnificent *Collection not Collection* LP, though that may have something to do with the increased Mr. Wanky influence in the vox. This is still some of the most stripped-down shit that could reasonably be called music, in the best possible way. Minimal drums, bass carrying the melodic duties with a fuzz-box for a guitar (most of the time) and the vocals yelping and yipping just barely ahead of the back beat. Happiness is fuckin' noise alright, but all the extant copies of this are sold out so if you want a piece of the action you better get to your local distro pronto. This is the first release on Mr. Wanky's (him again!) label Noise Punk Records. Keep an eye on the blogspot for new releases. (noisepunkrecords.blogspot.com/)

Keeping with the real Severna Park Hardcore, LOTUS FUCKER are back with a new split EP with Columbus Ohio's PENIS GEYSER. LOTUS FUCKER, as ever, rage on. Three more one-take tracks from the magic Barclay House studio, these are a bit less melodic than the WANKYS split. Really, this is the most straightforward stuff they've done since the *Answer=Bloodwashed Noise* demo. Pure raging distorted hardcore with all the traditional influences but retaining that element of unpredictability / character (and to a lesser extent anime obsession) that keeps them standing out from the pack of current US bands.

PENIS GEYSER (*eww...*) are a glorious throwback to the early '90s days of dubbed practice tapes of classic noise-core bands like 7 MINUTES OF NAUSEA, early CRIPPLE BASTARDS (99 song demo era especially) and W.B.I. If you're not familiar with that scene, imagine SIEGE recorded through a boombox but with way shorter songs. I know the name might be a turn-off, but this is some brilliantly derranged shit. (Solar Funeral, www.solar-funeral.org)

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

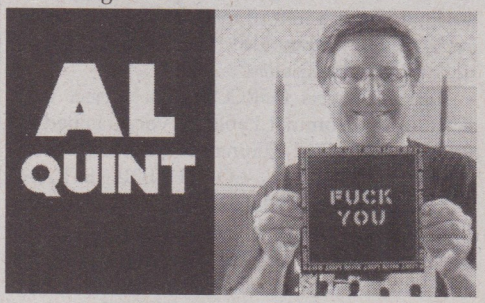
I'm likely the most popular person in the world, if one judges popularity by the amount of loner creeps that come up to me and engage me in conversation I do not desire. This happens to me regularly, and while I have no qualms with speaking to the public, the sheer amount of nutcases bothering me has largely contributed to my being a bit of a paranoiac when it comes to conversations with strangers. Occasionally I hear something interesting; more often than not, I'm bored to nearly tears and have flash visions of suicide. And listen to this: I had some prick come talking to me the other day, telling me (of all things), why he liked punk. I became ill, I felt sick, I threw up. The chump, the dunce, was telling me he liked it because—and I'm still laughing, ha, ha, listen to this—he likes punk because it's sincere.

I've got news for all you cocksuckers out there: in 2011, in *MRR*, in, hell, anything at all, relevance, context, (grammar), all of that is useless, nothing is sacred/everything is permitted because who gives a shit enough to stop some nothing like you. This is true, even though in the original edit I typed it in all capitals because I'm *passionate*, just like that was in italics because I'm stressing it. And so is most everything I say, though I've often been cast as some sort of villainous, rabble-rousing subhuman whose greatest crime, at least in print, is insincerity. Well, fuck, Joe Q. Public might be right, I might be insincere, at least a lot of the time (could you blame me?), but I got news for you weak-kneed shut-ins: so is music.

What the hell is sincere about the closet-cases doing the one-person circle-pit at the Gilman while a reformed Dr Know (The worst hardcore band of all time) blares away onstage for the tenth time in a month? Is being a grown human being and dressing up *like a pirate* and calling yourself a "Pyrate Punk" sincere? Is putting out some crummy grind core 7" with your bands (named after some shit actor) logo scrawled in graffiti? Is a fucking *mohawk* sincere? How about whatever the hell "Garage Rock" is (I can't figure out if it's the Ohsees or the Chesterfield Kings)? Of course not. And they're about as original as a Renaissance Fair.

I typed in all capitals earlier that relevance is meaningless in 2011, and I was right, as usual, but I'm not proud of it (much). An example of the meaninglessness of this whole relevance/sincerity bullshit: There is going to be a concert in New York soon with the title "Our Band Could Be Your Life: The Concert". The performers are all semi-famous, precious indie-rock bands called things like "Delicate Steve" (playing the Minutemen) and the band Dirty Projectors playing Black Flag (etc.). This is ludicrous, this is absurd; but it's par for the course and we just gotta suck in our guts and accept it. After all, what's the point of fighting the inevitable? We've returned to a world where cover bands are accepted, where tributes are the norm, where some sick nostalgia has wormed it's way into the taste of the punk public and beyond, trends are recycled (Foreign Hardcore/D-Beat/whatever "raw punk" is) for the third or fourth time in a decade. It's offensive, almost, but taking offense to something that really has nothing to do with you seems like too much effort. Even if there was something to be done, which there isn't, what would the outcome be? More of the same? The so-called "Spirit of Punk" is dead in a grave, history, and that's all this is anymore, history revisited, an endless stream of documentaries and photo shows and cover gigs all trying to glean a glimpse of what *Punk Once Was*, all trying to recapture the freshness and excitement that all but vanished decades ago. Punk has stagnated and drowned, Sargasso'd in a sea of irrelevance with no hope of rescue and that's fine. I feel a sense of that hopelessness that covered rock and roll fans in the late '70s, when faced with the dinosaurs still roaming in the guise of Led Zeppelin, Yes, et al. Is there a difference between that and when I take a look at show listings and see the Clean, Decry, Verbal Abuse, Radio Birdman, on and on, a list into infinity (Yes, there is—Led Zeppelin is better than Decry). Newer groups try their damndest to ape the *Sounds of the Past*, only coming off with any degree of success when they're too incompetent to pull it off (which is how all great punk is created). It's like if you went to a history museum, checked out the cavemen mannequins and decided you'd be like them. I don't see the sense in it, I don't see the danger in it and I rarely see the excitement in a bunch of nerds playing dress-up for each other. There's a reason no one dances at punk shows. The energy is missing, the beat has faded and only exists as some echo, no matter how loud it blares, however expensive the amplifier running through the P.A. at Emo's, it's all a god dam echo and my ears are tired.

What with these ancient groups doing KISS-style "Final Tours" with Vegas Elvis set-lists, and the new groups sounding like a tenth generation Xerox of a Xerox, what's the real rock fan to do? I've mentioned in previous columns that attaching yourself to "indie rock" or whatever electronic sound-of-the-day is popular is a cop-out, and won't look pretty on the slate when you're trying to get into *rock and roll heaven* (I heard the band is great). Punk cannot simply become more and more specialized—it must cease to exist entirely, buried under the sands of time. But what other, as-yet unknown variation in the DNA of rock roll will carry its spirit on? Eventually there will be a reaction against the tyranny of indie rock, but when? And what? Personally, I don't give a shit-I broke the needle on my record player listening to a Last Resort LP last week and I don't have enough money to get a new one, so I guess I'll get into video games or something.



A PLETHORA OF NEW RECORDS

I've been lagging on the record reviews for the last couple of columns, as I've turned my attention to my over-consumption of iced coffee to *de rigeur* political rants to last month's column about the upcoming film *Glue: A Boston Hardcore Fable*. Turns out the film itself is a fable or, more accurately, a figment of a certain *MRR* columnist's imagination. Did you happen to notice that the column was for the April issue? I wonder if I'll fool as many people with this one as I did with the announcement of a free MINOR THREAT reunion show by the Washington Monument in my April '09 column. I was astonished that even some of my *MRR* compatriots fell for that one.

But it's time for an all-music column as the vinyl (and stray CDs and demos) pile up. I have a sticker on one of my record-shelving units from Sound Pollution (R.I.P.) that says "never mind the melody..." That slogan could apply to the passel of records I got from Martin Sorrondeguy's Lengua Armada label. He sent a stack of ten 7" discs he's released over the past year or so, from bands around the globe and each band operates in its own throttling realm. I've decided to review the five most recent of those offerings. Martin's records tend to go out of print fairly quickly so you might want to shoot him an email at martincrudo@yahoo.com to see what's available or check with your friendly distro. We begin with Bay Area band VACCUUM and their massive onslaught of distortion. The buried-in-the-mix vocals are provided by Robert Collins (ARTIMUS PYLE, etc) and, while the attack isn't as noisy as, say, LEBENDEN TOTEN or NERVESKADE, the aesthetic leans towards that. A sonic terror. Japan's TOTSUGEKI SENSYA offer a similar type of terror for the five song *Chain of Tragedy* EP. Harsh vocals and a trebly, distorted blaze that has an old-school Japanese hardcore fervor.

NECROMONGO, from Peru, offer plenty of speedy d-beat wreckage on their five song *Grabaciones Desde La Ultratumba* EP, although "La Perdicion" slows things down. "Vamos" takes a RAW POWER-ish turn, especially with the gui-

tar buzz.

Upon hearing some of the shredding guitar leads and overall tone on CRIATURAS's *Aranas en el Corzon* EP, I thought it sounded a bit like VAASKA. It turns out CRIATURAS are from Austin and include a couple of VAASKA-ians, namely guitarist Vampis and that band's vocalist Eddie appears here on bass. Dru's vocals are sometimes more offkey/abrasive than I handle but the songs have a potent surge. Actually, their songs do have a hint of melody here and there, such as on "Paranoide." Solid d-beat thump with metallic flourishes.

Finally, there's PORCODIO, a project with ANTI YOU drummer Paolo on vocals joined by various Richmond luminaries from GOVERNMENT WARNING, SOUTHSIDE STRANGLERS, DIRECT CONTROL, etc. Bass-driven hardcore providing a pummeling effect—as always, Brandon Ferrell's drumming provides an abundance of locomotive-like bash. Given their Euro/American composition, the sound draws from both regions although the main emphasis is old Italian hardcore and Paolo's nasally timbre sounds inspired by the vocalist from INDIGESTI.

As long as I mentioned DIRECT CONTROL, that leads to a (not-so) clever segue into a review of *Bucktown Hardcore*, a collection of the band's demos. The first side is DIRECT CONTROL's thirteen song demo recorded in 2003 and with Ryan from MUNICIPAL WASTE on bass and his nimble runs really stand out here—in fact, as great as DIRECT CONTROL' first album *You're Controlled* was, these performances outdo them. Flip it over and there's a four song session from '05 that yielded comp tracks for one of the *No Bullshit* discs and MRR's *Public Safety* comp and some really rough four track recordings from 2002 with the original North Carolina lineup. Humble origins and the '03 demo represented a pretty big leap. You probably know the deal with these guys by now, but just in case, it's early '80s-styled hardcore played with reckless enthusiasm—loud, fast and kicking ass from start to finish. The way it should be done, in other words. And Ryan's back playing with them of late. I hope I get at least one more chance to see 'em. (Tankcrimes, www.tankcrimes.com)

Brandon is a busy guy with all of his bands, running a record store (Vinyl Conflict) and putting out records on his No Way label, including four brand new 7"s. First up is the second EP by Minneapolis wreckers MUCH WORSE, *Absolute Nightmare*. Their debut, *Proper Execute*, was kick-ass and this one is equally so. Overdriven hardcore with manic vocals and power-packed arrangements. This style has been done to death and MUCH WORSE aren't particularly original but the band's pure aggro is tough to resist. An angry balm to soothe the outrage of living in "a nation of halfwits" that they mention on "Can't Bullshit A Bullshitter." Winnipeg's CROSS RAGE are also an angry bunch. Pretty similar in style to DIRECT CONTROL, with its rough-hewn old-school sound. Probably not too hard to figure out what you're getting here.

Not that FY FAN have ever been a smooth 'n polished-sounding band but their new EP, *Ingen Framtid For Alltid*, (their first for No Way) ratchets up the rawness/distortion more than on the previous EPs although the sound hasn't changed. This is pillaging Swedish hardcore played on stun.

Finally, a change of pace, the new NIGHT BIRDS EP, *Midnight Movies*. The title track has a surfy, west coast sound—East Bay Ray guitar reverb and an ADOLESCENTS/DI-like hook on the course. On the backside, there are three charging and catchy punk songs. One of 'em, "Triple Feature" is reminiscent of DI's "Obnoxious." I know I'm using the comparison crutch but these are just influences, not slavish recreations. Fun stuff with well-above average musicianship, especially their guitarist Mike Catalano. (www.nowayrecords.com)

THE PMRC's "lost" album, *Politics, Morality, Religion, Cash* has been released on Motorchest Records in a limited quantity. As in *really* limited—a one-time pressing of 200 copies. Another band from the incestuous Houston scene where it seems as though everyone is in a dozen bands. This three piece dish out rockin' punk with hardcore touches and smart topical lyrics. But they reach into other musical regions, as well, such as on the moody "Civilized Vultures." Songs like "Get Away From Me," "Mass Infection" and "Leaders of the Free World" slam in a BIG BOYS-ish manner although Mike Grayum's vocal style is throaty and beefier (for want of a better term). They wrap it up with a cover of CRACKED ACTOR's infamous "Nazi School." As with other Houston bands (the ENERGY, NO TALK, SECRET PROSTITUTES), punk is used a starting point but the PMRC refuse to fit any strict mold. Some heavy vinyl, too—210 gram!—and tucked inside a screened cover. (www.myspace.com/nocausepunk).

Speaking of bands that mix things up, there's *Dangerous*, the latest album from veteran Finnish band HERO DISHONEST. They don't stray too far from aggressive hardcore punk and that's the primary focus. It's not the whole story, though. The closing song on the first side, "Space Command," starts out full-tilt but then settles into an ominous lope with an odd sci-fi narrative recorded by HEWHOCORRUPTS' vocalist Ryan Durkin. Things take a slightly more expansive route on the flip, starting with the BLACK FLAG-meets-EFFIGIES inspiration (to my ears) for "Company Bad Man" and both "Finger On A Button" and Like A Moth To A Flame" display an aptitude for driving rock. "A Cult Of Comfortable Everyone," alternates between a stew of barbed 'n sputtering guitar over percolating bass line, interrupted by some manic thrash. There's something of a whimsical, semi-abstract nature to certain song titles and lyrics. Perhaps to confuse the listener or, in this case, record reviewer, some of the titles listed on the back of the cover and record label don't always match the titles on the lyric sheet, although there's thematic link: is it "Fag Agenda" or "From Fred Phelps With Love," about the Westboro Bapstist church i.e. "God Hates Fags" psychopaths? When one writes that an album is "interesting" or "creative," it could be considered damning with faint praise. No "grit in the grooves," to use a phrase heard on a radio ad many years ago. Trust me—that's not the case here. Hero Dishonest are a dynamic, unpredictable band. (IfSociety, www.ifsociety.com)

BROKEN NECK from Pittsburgh play raw-sounding metal-tinged punk on their six song EP on Art Fraud Records. The cover is a tribute to BLACK SABBATH's *Masters of Reality* and they have a song called "Paranoid" that sneaks in a snippet of the Sab song but isn't a cover. Scalding vocals from Holly—it's a wonder she hasn't destroyed her vocal chords yet—and a good amount of bash.

Also on Art Fraud, there's the *Funnypapers* EP by CONFIDENCE MEN. They hammer out a dark, mid-tempo punk sound, throwing in a burst of speed for "Catching Flies." At times the three songs here made me think of another Pittsburgh band, BRAIN HANDLE. Looking forward to hearing more from this band. The guitar sound is particularly grabbing, with a haunting and jarring burn. (Art Fraud, artfraud records@gmail.com)

Delving into noisier territory, there's the first 7" from GIRLS OF PORN. An abrasive, trebly, blown-out mess of a garage punk sound along the lines of HOMOSTUPIDS. Those are positive attributes in this instance although I think extended exposure could cause my (or other listeners') head(s) to explode. It comes with a 3D cover and glasses and that's pretty nifty but the music is plenty head-messing on its own without additional visual effects. (369 Hamilton St., Apt. 2, Albany, NY 12210, girlsofadultfilm@gmail.com)

I hesitate to refer to anything as emo-core, since it's such a loaded term/description but that's the musical realm occupied by DESCARADOS. For their new 7" EP, *El Canto De Los Humildes*, the band follow a similar blueprint as on their previous 12". Stirring, melodic punk with a DC-ish tilt—think RITES OF SPRING, only without being completely overwrought about it. Warm, stinging guitar lines and hard-hitting drumming give the songs presence, while Carlos sings in an impassioned style, quite the opposite of his high-pitched rant in his other band SIN ORDEN. Packaged nicely in a screen-printed fold out sleeve, printed inner sleeve and with a poster. (Stonehenge, BP 30005, 33037 Bordeaux, FRANCE, www.stonehengerecords.com)

LOW THREAT PROFILE are one of those bands spoken about in hushed tones. Add my voice to the choir of people lauding the virtues of their new 12", *Product #2*. A collaboration between members of NO COMMENT, LACK OF INTEREST and INFEST and it took a long time for this 12" to see the light of day, with the music recorded in 2000 and Andy's nettled vocals in 2010. This follows up a long-time-in-coming 7" EP that came out last year. The INFEST comparisons are inevitable, with Matt Domino's guitar sound and the tempo shifts—and those are executed with ruthless precision. Beyond that, there's an obvious affection for early Boston hardcore (NEGATIVE FX, in particular) and early DRI. These "old-timers" can definitely teach the youngsters a lesson or two and the sen-

timent behind "My One and Only True Love," about a life-long affection for this kind of music I'm writing about, seems sincere. Too bad they're not going to be doing any sort of touring or all that many live shows. (Deep Six, www.deepsixrecords.com)

Wrapping things up, MANIPULATION are back with another session of punishing hardcore on their second self-titled 7" EP. Rampaging soundbeds, as one song goes into another, bridged by squalls of feedback and creating the accompaniment for Jordan's venomously emanated words. If there's a theme at all, it's pretty well summed up on "Under The Influence"—"there's no such thing as a world of plenty" and a lot of people are finding that out the hard way. I've repeatedly talked about a return to an 80s state of mind, full of despair and MANIPULATION express those thoughts with unabated anger both in a lyrical and musical sense. And they don't try to slavishly recreate the sounds from back then—this has a forceful, contemporary feel to it. (www.sorrystaterecords.com)

Before letting you move on to the no-doubt scintillating column after this one, I should mention that, while most of the records reviewed here are different types of hardcore punk, that's not all I'm interested in reviewing and/or playing on the radio show. I don't want to hear (most) pop-punk or emo or tough-guy hardcore but a perusal of the radio show playlist should make it clear I also like garage-tinged stuff and edgier, nervier (my terms) rock that are rooted in various shades of punk but aren't easily pigeonholed. I'm getting burnt out on the straight thrash and have had more of an urge to mix things up, lately.

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net, www.sonicoverload.net

Last month I talked about the uprising in Egypt and the difference between political and social revolution. I didn't know which way things were going to go at that time, and now we have a clearer picture. To my mind, the definitive event that pushed the military into seizing power was the masses of workers going out on strike. Protestors in a central square are bad publicity, but history has shown they are easily crushed (Tiananmen Square) or forgotten (Kiev). However, when the protest moves from the political to the economic and mass numbers of workers from across different industries go out on strike then the underlying relations of social classes are threatened. A general strike, even if only for economic reasons, is a pre-revolutionary situation. The ruling elite fears that the workers will see how much power they have to bring the country to a halt and are forced to grant reforms. In this case, they got rid of the dictator and formed a provisional government. The Egyptians and Tunisians will have to keep up the pressure if they want real change.

Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Wisconsin? The neighboring state of Wisconsin has been the scene of widespread social unrest over recent conservative Republican plans to bust the public sector unions. The manipulation of the media in this country is pervasive and complete. Somehow, after the financial sector managed to bring the world's economy to brink of ruin it gets bailed out at the taxpayers expense with little protest. Meanwhile, the teachers are blamed for mismanagement of the economy that lead to their state's budget crisis. The corporate interests that control the media have been very skillful at diverting attention away from the elite which has benefitted to mightily from the way our system has been re-engineered over the past few decades. Instead the classic "divide and rule" tactics are used to pit one group of workers against another. Instead of questioning how the teachers pension funds have been mismanaged by Wall Street, the public cries out to cut the wages and benefits of the last unionized sector of the economy. There was an editorial in the New York Times not long ago "the class war is over and the rich won." While their victory is not absolute, breaking the public sector unions is one of the last battles of this class war. The economic crisis the ruling elite has created, will no doubt continue to be used a pretext for dismantling what remains of the New Deal, collective bargaining, social security and Medicare. The tea party voter is in for a shock when he realizes that the "welfare handouts" his congressmen campaigned against, are his own social security benefits and health care. As I said above, the manipulation of the American media is so complete that it is morbidly fascinating to watch the middle and working classes consistently vote for and promote the continued deterioration of their own standard of living.

Now we move on to another topic completely. I've talked before about how the internet fundamentally changed the landscape for DIY hardcore. The main structural change has been downloads replacing record and fanzine sales as a medium for exchanging music and information. While many laud moving to a model of free or very low cost distribution of music and information, others point out that it has cheapened and diluted the quality that was enshrined in records and zines of old. I'd like to see a debate/series of columns and articles in this magazine on the over all effects of the internet on hardcore punk. That is to say, pick several writers and have each of them take a position, that the internet has had an overall positive or negative effect on hardcore. Let each writer argue their view point and the reader can decide. I am still of a mixed opinion on the subject, but at the risk of seeming like a curmudgeon who thinks everything was better "back in the day" I'd have to say the overall impact, has trended towards the negative. That said, I came of age in an era before the internet and had to adjust to its impact. This month though, I'd like to turn the spotlight on one area that really is distorted by the internet, and area I spend an undue amount of time thinking about, record distribution.

It has increasingly become the trend to release records in smaller and smaller pressing quantities. This is something that has been debated in fanzines and on message boards at great length. One side argues that the audience for vinyl records is greatly diminished, so only a handful need be made. Another side counters that this is elitist and leads to an engineered scarcity. This scarcity then drives up the price as demand out strips the supply. The hustle to secure limited records and the high prices that result, are these days a new records primary form of publicity or hype. (Publicity and hype used to come via the music press and touring). Therefore, many mediocre records that would have been released to little fanfare in a pressing of 2000 copies, become very hot items in pressings of 200. The real shame is when a record is also very good and could easily sell 1000 copies, is relegated to a vanity pressing of 200-300 only to be heard by an elite of internet based collectors. Compounding this is that many (most?) of the hyped records are bought by speculators to "flip" or resell on a secondary market at a profit, rather than for the content. A frequent analogy is drawn to the comic book scene of the early '90s. Comic companies got so wrapped up in making limited editions, collectible variants and the like that they lost sight of the content. The two trends converged and there was a flood of limited and collectible comics on the market, but all had very low quality content. The comic collectors decided they were tired of paying more for less and there was a backlash.

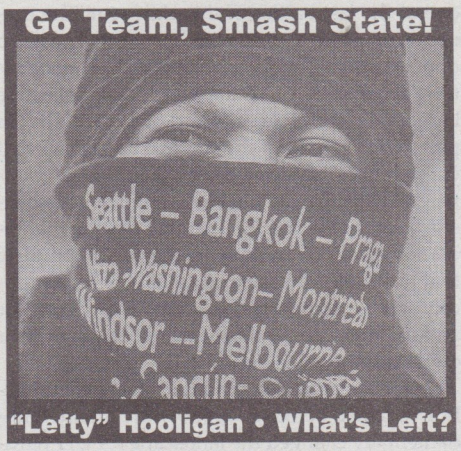
We've had this discussion in these pages before, but let's take a step back. In days of old, vinyl was the primary format for hearing punk music. Later came tapes and CDs, but vinyl was the main way to hear music, most punk fans weren't die hard collectors who lived from second to second refreshing label websites to get in on a limited pre order. They bought records they liked at record stores or gigs. In the '80s records sold tens, sometimes hundreds of thousands of copies. Almost every 40 year old punk has or had a small stack of Dead Kennedys, DOA, Black Flag and Circle Jerks vinyl. These people were not die-hard music fanatics; they just bought some records they liked and maybe some tapes for the car. The key back then to selling tens of thousands of records, was to get good distribution. Dead Kennedys and Black Flag LPs were readily available in just about any record store, from small independent stores to mall chain stores. People mostly buy records that are in front of them, and a lot of people took a chance on these records where ever they saw them and bought copies. One of Tim Yo's big concerns back in the day was distribution and how distributors controlled access to the market and how they were able to cripple and kill small labels by withholding payment. He repeatedly urged the new punk millionaires of the '90s to

use their wealth and influence to set up an independent distribution network. No one heeded his advice.

In the '90s when DIY hardcore moved more underground the collector mindset began to move more into the mainstream of hardcore. Record collectors, labels and distros began to set more of the agenda and the aesthetic. These were by and large the music fanatics and die-hards who had emerged from the '80s. Still most people who listened to punk picked up a Born Against or Nausea record at a show or record shop. The punk explosion of the '90s led by the commercial success of Green Day and the Offspring, brought a huge influx of interest and a re-introduction of many big business attitudes into record distribution. Suddenly bands were selling tens of thousands of CDs and records again and you could find punk titles in mainstream record stores from which they had been absent for some years. Some of the labels of this era, Slap a Ham, Six Weeks, Vermiform, Allied, Havoc, Prank, Sound Pollution, were selling 5,000 or more copies of a popular title, while those with the bigger distribution networks (Epitaph, Lookout) sold many times that. Even with underground DIY labels, the key was getting good distribution, getting your records into as many stores and distros as possible. A network of DIY distributors developed as an underground alternative to the corporate distros that ripped off so many labels. Although it seemed there was always a temptation to align with one of these distributors in the never ending quest for better distribution.

Then in the mid '00s the internet finally caught up to hardcore and record sales were completely eclipsed by file sharing. It seems like almost overnight between 2004 and 2006 records went from selling 3,000 to 5,000 copies to selling 1,000 to 2,000 and it's continued downward from there. In the last ten years a *lot* of bigger and medium sized distributors have gone under, very few new distributors have started. Instead we have seen a reversal of the goal in distributing a new release. Instead of working hard to get your record good distribution and get it into as many hands as possible, the goal is to limit its availability to a tiny few in order to build some kind of mystique around it. One argument is, that since the vast majority of people listen to digital files instead of records now, this doesn't matter. For people who just want the music, it's available for free on numerous websites. For those who must have the hard product, it's there at a market dictated price but it's no longer the only way to hear a band's music. As one of the labels that struggled for years to get good distribution, I am dismayed that my sales are now a fraction of what they were five or eight years ago. My new releases usually have a few hundred copies on colored vinyl. These sell out in the first week or so, and after that I sell an ever-diminishing number of copies. This is because the playing field now is tilted away from "casual buyers" who buy records that are in front of them at a reasonable price, towards collectors who are eager to buy only that which has some cachet of rarity, collectability or resale potential.

However, let's not lose sight of this fact, hardcore punk is bigger now than it probably ever has been, there are scenes in almost every country, town and city. That said, things are more diverse than ever and broken up into sub scenes. Most people now listen to music on a digital format and see no need for hard copies. On top of that the traditional distribution network has broken down as many distributors and stores have gone under. This increasingly means that a tiny elite of collectors drives the agenda for those labels still releasing hard product. All that aside, most people still buy records that are in front of them. Well managed stores that have a good selection of quality records at a decent price are still doing fine. A well stocked distro that travels with a band on tour can sell huge quantities of records, especially in towns without record stores. There are still many "casual buyers" or slightly less than fanatic collectors who will buy good records but don't lose sleep over super limited pre orders. The internet has distorted a lot of the process here by mixing up the supply and demand. Mediocre bands on bigger labels with good promotion and distribution can still sell tens of thousands of copies, often to the dismay of fans with an ear trained to quality over market hype. On the other hand, truly excellent bands do their fans and potential fans a great disservice by limited the availability of their releases to a handful of quick on the trigger pre order types.



William Gibson once replied to critics of his cyberpunk science fiction, of his portrayal of dark, dystopian futures, that he considered his early novels rather optimistic. At least he believed there would be a future. Given the Cold War standoff of mutually assured nuclear destruction, which generated so many apocalyptic nightmares and end-of-the-world scenarios among Baby Boomers and subsequent generations, the prospect of a future, no matter how bleak, is considered a plus.

Or is it? It's oh-so-punk to proclaim "No Future." Perhaps it's more punk to acknowledge there is a future, but that the future blows. For me, a rather dismal future is right around the corner, because I never got my wish that "I hope I die before I get old," to quote another great rock'n'roll band.

A central technological and cultural dynamic for the past sixty plus years has been the transformation of the analog into the digital. To date, this has meant the increasing use of digital recording methods over analog, and the switch from analog distribution methods to digital. As someone born in the '50s and raised in the '60s, I grew up with all sorts of analog media—records, books, comics, newspapers, photographs, movies—as well as a panoply of real world distribution options— record shops, bookstores, comic book nooks, newsstands, singleplex movie theaters. Daily existence, whether as artistic performance or real life, remains analog. Yet, in the last forty years, recording and distributing reality has shifted to the digital. Today vinyl, film, printed material, analog media of every sort is rapidly disappearing. Retail distribution for music, art and print is fast vanishing, and independent versions of such establishments are virtually extinct in huge swaths of this country, including major cities like LA and New York. The extant analog and digital media are distributed more and more online, via the Internet, which makes every computer a virtual store.

I don't need to argue to readers of *Maximum Rock'n'roll* that analog media is better than digital. The qualitative superiority of music on vinyl over CDs is common knowledge to this crowd, and lets not even talk about that godawful crap called MP3. Less well known is the difference between analog and digital photography/film making. For instance, those involved in old-fashioned photography and darkroom photographic printing contend that the depth and nuance of black as a color cannot be matched currently by digital photographic techniques and printing methods. I might then assert that an art form like film noir is impossible using digital media, but my point is not to rehash all the endless debates over analog versus digital media. Much more important for me is the loss of the tactile world as a consequence of moving from analog to digital distribution of whatever media that exists.

But first, a confession. I am complicit in the destruction of analog media and analog distribution. In 1983, I tested whether an Apple Lisa could come close to matching CAD-CAM blueprinting systems of the day for a corporation doing government contract work. In 1984, I purchased my first Mac, upgrading to a Mac Plus in 1985 to learn PageMaker in particular, and desktop publishing in general. I've been a Mac user ever since. I published most of my zines and political propaganda, and formatted my first novel, on Macs. I earned my living as an Apple tech for nearly a decade and a half. At my last job, a book publishing company, the art department made the transition from Apple's Classic operating system (OS 9) to unix-based OS X (10.2, Jaguar, to be exact). I worked with a particularly arrogant independent contractor to make the conversion, and I admit to being surprised when I noticed that Apple had changed its startup from a version of the colorful Happy Mac to an ominous grey Apple logo.

"Yep," the asswipe consultant said when he noticed my shock. "It's a whole new community now."

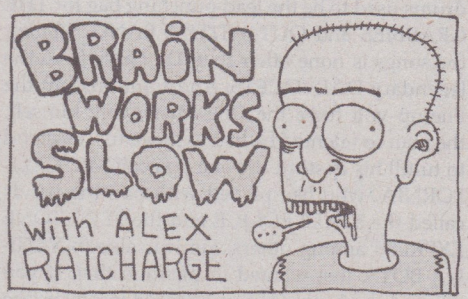
I was even more appalled by his abuse of the word community. It was the first time I realized

how thoroughly the term had been degraded. From meaning a group of people sharing everything—geographic location, work, play, raising children, creating local culture—"community" had been reduced to meaning a group of people owning or using the same kind of computer. And this grotesque, deforming reductionism is what is essential to the dynamic of transforming the analog into the digital. Clearly, as record shops, bookstores, comic book nooks, newsstands, and movie theaters evaporate, to be replaced by online, Internet shopping, consumption, and other sterile interactions, traditional, analog community is fast devolving into virtual, digital community. There is the loss of the sensuous, the tactile, the concrete.

And so we return to William Gibson. "The body was meat," to be digitally transcended. Real life is to be replaced by Second Life, a collection of digital avatars pretending to community. A longtime friend, and fellow Mac aficionado, got so immersed in his Second Life that he would come home from work and plug into his computer, entirely ignoring his wife and his actual life. Finally, out of desperation, his wife joined Second Life in order to have some sort of interaction with her husband.

Now, that creeps me out.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.



NEGATIVE GUEST LIST.

Last year I spent an evening with Brendon in the city of Melbourne, Australia. When I said "Hey man how's it going?" he replied "Fine," ensued by twenty or so minutes of silence. At dusk we sat on a bench in a slightly isolated park. I asked, "Do you know any French bands?" He replied "Only a few." Twenty more minutes of silence. It was a bit awkward but let's be honest here, doing anything "fun" in Melbourne costs a bunch of money and if the money is spent on having fun then what's gonna pay for the outrageously expensive cigarettes? Right. Holidays. After an hour or so our wordless discussion and chain-smoking contest was interrupted by some nervous jerk street gang homeless kind of guy who walked by us all sweaty and tense, asking if we wanted to buy an IPod from him. Growing up in the suburbs of Paris I learned that the only clever answer to some random asshole trying to sell stolen junk in the streets usually is "No thanks", so I was a bit surprised when Brendon replied "How much?" and I definitely *wasn't* surprised when the guy grabbed his cash and started to walk away with it. My two new buddies then got into a nice long verbal fight that got very close to a fist fight but ended with his money back and a cheap IPod filled with, believe it or not, a bunch of decent to good music for the aural enjoyment of the editor of Negative Bullshit Monthly Magazine a.k.a *Negative Guest List* a.k.a the best thing to happen to music fanzines since the glory days of *Black To Comm/ Dear Jesus/ Z-Gun*. The rest of the evening was spent bored at some shithouse arty "noise" gig where everyone was friends with everyone except us. On the way home I stopped by my neighborhood video store to rent some good Hollywood science-fiction flick; Brendon came out of it with some experimental weirdo DVD stuffed down his pants. Later he passed out drunk on the living room couch as I was trying to decipher the hidden message behind the first *Matrix* movie. Shit didn't make much sense, I mean, life is the *Matrix* alright but whatever—ladies and gentlemen, here are eight things Brendon Annesley wants you to know.

You've been putting out *Negative Guest List* every month for all of 2010 and have been pretty active in terms of publishing fanzines as well the year before that. You also work on a few other publications. What does a typical day in your life consist of? How much time in a given week would you say you spend working on fanzines, and where does the urge come from?

A typical weekday will have me woken up at seven in the morning to eat a hot breakfast, usually consisting of fried eggs rested on a bed of toast, and going to work at Gibson Island's Incitec Fertilizer Plant as a licensed sandblaster and industrial coater. I wear high visible clothing and come home covered in paint, sulphur and bright ideas. The air smells of liquid zinc, the Brisbane River and a nearby water treatment facility. It is shit work for otherwise unqualified people: chronic alcoholics, slot machine jockeys and the Irish. On weekends I rarely rise before midday, and after cleaning myself up, will begin a process of filtering feelings of fear and shame out of my body through various questionable means. Like seeing the new Darren Aranofsky film, chewing tobacco, or getting Thai food at a busy restaurant and skipping out on the bill. I spend my nights watching films, cooking, playing with myself and working on the magazine. The latter constitutes roughly three hours per night, unless my vagina person is staying over and brings wine. The urge comes from a desire to be a productive human being in a landscape of idle waterweights.

Any tips for writers wishing to become more productive? Coffee? Alcohol? Speed? A strong drug-free lifestyle with plenty of sport?

If you lead a clean lifestyle full of sport and sleep well each night, consider me envious. I don't want to promote drug use but sometimes they've worked for me.

***NGL* covers a wide-range of music, sometimes going in mainstream rock territory while staying clearly rooted in underground garage, punk and weird rock'n'roll. It doesn't feel like there's a limit to what you would and wouldn't cover. Or is there? How would you describe *NGL* to unfamiliar American readers?**

I'll cover anything that crosses path with me or holds my interest at the time, and I encourage all other contributors to do the same. I would describe the magazine as a regular rock based editorial that deals with many facets of underground and unique music, as well as wider culture and phenomena. Alternately, I would describe it as the spew from my asshole, delivered on a monthly basis. Each issue's release date coincides with my sister's menstrual cycle.

The last issue I read made me feel like shit, in a good way – the writing is aggressive, nervous, critical, full of black humor and sarcasm. What is it you're pissed off and paranoid about? The city of Brisbane? Australia in general? THE WORLD? Stupid questions like this one?

Brisbane is absolutely essential to the existence of the magazine, which is why I headline each cover with the subtitle "BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA." Brisbane has been prejudiced against for far too long, our strong history of popular and underground music laughed at (does the name "Gibbs" mean anything to you self righteous pricks?!), and I am tired of the constant degradation of my people. I want readers to know where I come from! I want them to know I'm proud! The elements of humor are also very important to what I want people to take from the zine, there a few living people I respect and admire more than several contemporary comedians (Doug Stanhope, Louis CK etc). As for the nervous/paranoid slant, there's plenty to account for that, most of which I talk openly about or allude to in the magazine and none of which I really care to divulge in too deeply here.

Each issue of *NGL* features a lot of bands interviews. What are the interviews you're the most proud of having featured in the zine, and do many bands refuse to answer or just say yes and never get back to you? What bands would you like to feature but feel you'd be having a hard time getting replies from?

If a band agrees to do an interview and doesn't get back to me in a timely fashion, I will just make up their answers and print them as if though they were their own. If a band I like doesn't get back to me in regards to an interview, I will sell all of their records that I own and slander them repeatedly on internet message boards (AKA: Shit Hives) and the city streets. Some of my favorite interviews from the first year were the ones with Clarke from Stickmen with Rayguns, Anthony from Icky Boyfriends and Domokoz from Rusted Shut. More recently I reckon Bassholes, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Tractor Sex Fatality and The Axemen turned over some great responses that would have made for enjoyable reads. Then there's the recent nine page Cheater Slicks spread! I haven't really hard a hard time tracking down bands I'd like to feature any more than I knew I should've, but I have come into contact with people/musicians who I respect and would like to feature

that would prefer to not discuss their past and let their music (or film, etc), speak for itself. Then there's that death thing...

You also work on *Dirty Alleys Dirty Minds*. What's the difference between *DADM* and *NGL*, why keep the two separated? You once mentioned working on some kind of collective porn fanzine as well, any news about that?

That would be *UNDONE*, named for the Onyas and edited and published by my mate Bill. I came up with the basic premise for the magazine at a time when I felt I wasn't happy with the readership *NGL* was cultivating and its vague ties to the way Australian underground music was being promoted. It would be a two man job, but I guess I got kinda shafted. It worked out for the best though, Bill has enough style and frustration to fill out a quality fanzine on his own. Its focus is on Australian rock and roll and "bloke" (Australian colloquial slang) culture. Pure shit, pure gold. *NGL* and *DA/DM* are aesthetically different in just about every aspect of fanzine writ, sans that it shares the editor: *Dirty Alleys* focuses exclusively on the paradigm of punk and hardcore and is very militant about that, while *NGL* covers a broader spectrum of both music and literature. *DA/DM* is also written under a single assumed personality of my own making ("Amphetamine Addiction"), while *NGL* is written by several, as well a handful of other people who have real names. For the sake of the famous *Maximum Rocknroll* punk and hardcore magazine, I'll expand on the *DA/DM* trip. Ahem: While most of today's punk/hardcore based fanzines come across as either overenthusiastic puff pieces or masturbatory knee-jerk dioramas, editorials like *Distort* and *Ratcharge* (both of whom I have done split zines with) do help generate and keep up an interest in this music. I'd like *DA/DM* to be spoken about in the same tones as these fine, deranged publications.

Best bands in Australia right now?

Feedtime, Grong Grong, HITS!, Wonderfuls, Slug Guts, Low Life, Circle Pit, Blank Realm, Kitchen's Floor, Total Control, Black Jesus, Whores, Lobster Prophet. I think Meat Thump has the potential to produce worthwhile material and I'm looking forward to recording an LP over the course of the next couple of years. Breakdance the Dawn remains a highly inventive, radically minded DIY cassette label. Everyone else can suck my ass; it stinks

What can we expect from you, *NGL* and *DADM* in 2011?

You can expect roughly one issue per month from the *Negative Guest List*, growing progressively tasteful and more ethnically exclusive with each release. There will be a noticeable shift in content that I want to ease into over coming issues; you can only talk about the same bullflop for so many years. I've been watching a lot of movies, doing some reading, experimenting with new ways to get high. This will all manifest into *Negative Guest List* features. From the *Dirty Alleys* magazine you shouldn't expect a goddamn thing, thereby any crude piece of excretion that happens to creep forth from that enterprise might come as a—for better or worse—surprise.

I will continue to release cassettes and small run vinyl releases through *Negative Guest List* records, including the aforementioned Wonderfuls EP, an upcoming live LP by Slug Guts that is their best work yet and an Australian pressing of Unholy Two's recent *$kum of the Earth* LP; one of America's most moving, powerful full length recordings since Bruce Springsteen's *The Rising*.

I am also currently making a film/documentary about Brisbane.

Work for a living, fight in the streets. Good bye.

Endnotes.

1. Send all complaints directly to Brendon at dirtyalley@msn.com. In America get copies of *NGL* through Goner Records.
2. If you liked this column you should read Johnny Ryan's *Angry Youth Comix*. If you didn't like it you should read it as well. Best comics ever.
3. Last month was the April issue. For the two asstards out there who didn't get it my column was a hoax – thank Buddah I'm not a parent, nor do I plan to be anytime soon. That was what we frenchies call an "April fish" (don't ask). Also "Vanne De Merde" means "Shitty Joke".
4. Listening a whole lot to the new 7"s by Circle Pit (on RIP Society/ Sweet Rot) and The Logjammers (on No Patience), mp3s of The Reatards early hits and the CD by French drum machine neo-humans Déjà Mort. Local hardcore bands Lost Boys and Veuve SS were also good when I saw them live.
5. For the first time in my life I have herpes! What an achievement, I finally feel like a proper all around human being. If you want some I don't mind sharing it, just get in touch at alex.simon82@yahoo.fr

MIND LESS CONTENTMENT
WITH CHUCK BARRELS

Ah, spring. The crack of the bat, the smack of the leather. I can smell the hot dogs and chewing tobacco already. Pitchers and catchers have reported, the best player in MLB is a pending free agent, some Hawaiian kid is raking in Kansas City, starting pitchers are already dropping like flies…it's an exciting time of year. It's sort of like slowly creeping up the big hill on a roller coaster. We're almost at the peak, ready for the rush of the regular season as we plummet down that slope. Look out for the Tribe this year, I think the rebuilding process will be showing some results this year as Carlos Santana emerges as one of the best backstops in the game, Fausto Carmona comes into his own as staff ace and my man Grady Sizemore comes back strong off an injury plagued 2010. We're not quite there yet, but we're getting a good whiff of the possibilities. But enough about the Greatest American Pastime, let's talk about America's Greatest Band!

HOMOSTUPIDS step up to the plate for their first at-bat of 2011 with the release of a 12" EP called *Strawberry Orange Peach Banana* (not "Licensed To Ill" as originally planned) on the always reliable Fashionable Idiots Record Label. What the HOMOSTUPIDS do here is go into a real studio and proceed to bang out what could be their longest record to date. I'm going to have to check the tape, but I'm pretty sure this is lengthier than either of their actual LPs. And it's packed with songs! Songs about things! It's absolutely fucking great. If you've never heard the HOMOSTUPIDS play ball before, well you are in for a treat, because they the play the hardcore punk as if they were some kind of garage band. It's *weird*. And it's the greatest music that America has to offer. Steven, Josh and Dale are currently out on the West Coast turning on some new fans (i.e. hippies and crust-fund punks) to their art so you may be watching them as you read this. Right now. Lucky you. You should buy this record at least twice. (www.fashionableidiots.com)

Okay, let's get a little more serious here. HOMOSTUPIDS are from Cleveland, one of the most magical places for music not located in Middle Earth, and so are the fantastic band called FOLDED SHIRT, who have also released a 12" sized EP on the Fashionable Idiots Record Label (from the home of the Minnesota Twins, in fact). FOLDED SHIRT is what you might call a "super group" as they are both super and a group of people at the same time. You might recognize Steven on bass from holding the microphone in NINE SHOCKS TERROR or THE MORMONS. The handsome Italian boy playing drums used to be the lead punching bag for THE GRABBIES and OUT WITH A BANG. Singing the songs is none other than Dr. Larry from the legendary DARVOCETS. And rounding out the line-up you have the One Man Army himself, the man so talented he had to move to Cleveland to fulfill his destiny, the one you call MR. CALIFORNIA, who has played with backing bands called the STATE POLICE and the FLINSTONE EXPRESS among others. He was also in VAGINA BOYS. Just wanted to mention that. If you enjoyed the 7" these guys released last year (the #3 best single of 2010), well you'll like this even more. The songs are better and it is a longer record. It has my favorite F/S song which is called "Retard Hoedown" (the best song FLIPPER never wrote, and it's even funnier than "Ha Ha Ha") along with about eight or nine more. The most ridiculous and awesome record you will probably hear all year; these guys are so good at what they do that they don't have to follow any rules. Like making sense or playing in tune and putting those things called hooks in songs. The vinyl is just a blank canvas for their artistic representation of what music should sound like. And that sound is childish and slightly unhinged dumb-punk. If you thought any of the other bands in capital letter in this paragraph were absurd, well get a load of this slab. And don't get me wrong, they actually play their instruments pretty well. There are "songs" here, not just jokes. If you don't like this music, I'm going to have to say you're no friend of

mine. Smell ya later. (www.fashionableidiots.com)

Cleveland is pretty awesome, and it's a fact that 95% of good music comes from East of the Mississippi, but sometimes there are some surprised out there. One of them is a band called BUTCHER COVER from the Oakland area of the Bay. They do not sing about pizza, they do not wear costumes (that I know of), they do not dress and write songs like it is 1972 or 1952. They are here and now. And they are pretty damn pissed off about the whole thing. The songs are about controversial topics that many "men" who keep their testicles in their girlfriend's purses for safe keeping might find in poor taste. But what else are you supposed to sing about when the band is playing the music so violently? Stuff happens in prison, and someone needs to let the world know. BC have former members of RED NURSE and TRACTOR SEX FATALITY and are as aggressive as those acts were, but bringing in some more nasty elements like Japanese hardcore, blastbeat drums and just sheer noise alongside a solid hardcore punk rock foundation. Maybe a little bit of "metal" too, in a more industrial sense. And some psych-garage, in the bad brown acid trip sense. It's a rough record that is not for pantywaists or minor leaguers. Maybe it's for fans of PUSSY GALORE, GAUZE, KILSLUG and DWARVES all at the same time. A label called Rotted Tooth from Chicago has released it in an edition of only 245 copies, which is about 255 too few methinks. They have no website, but you should be able to find this with some sleuthing, and should do so very quickly. Also has great silk-screened artwork with pages torn from one of my favorite books about knife-fighting, Bloody Iron. (Rotted Tooth)

As strange as it is, sometimes good music even comes from Europe. And not just anywhere in Europe, but England, which I think might be Europe's Greatest Country, since they speak the World's Greatest Language there. The band I speak of is called the PHEROMOANS, and they are from London I believe, which is also home to Rat Scabies, from what I hear. You've probably heard me mention this band before, as I enjoy them and their art-punk ways quite a bit and am very happy to be able to listen to them sprawl out over the length of a full album. If you like the *Messthetics* series of UK-DIY punk compilations from the, then these kids are right up your alley guv'nor. This is not street punk for the terraces, nor rock for the pubs. This is thinking man's punk rock, but it's not all that complicated when you get to the nuts and bolts. They just approach the genre with a sensibility that is equal parts takin' the piss and makin' you think. The sort of stuff that geniuses like BEN WALLERS and MARK E. SMITH have been known to do, although I do not think this band sounds very much like the FALL. Well, all British bands sound like the FALL somewhat, it's a rule over there, but PHEROMOANS aren't so obvious about it. I think they sound more like the artiest SWELL MAPS moments. The album is called *It Still Rankles* and it chugs, shambles and wanders around for 12" inches worth of wax, packed with angles, left turns and gentlemanly slaps to the face. I always like when they do the spoken word stuff with some atmospheric post-punk bits in the background, and they throw some of that in the salad bowl here, along with some strange and nearly primitive deconstructions of punk and rock. It's quite goddamn interesting, I tell you, and an album that only the British people could have made. Convulsive Records has released it in the United States to much thanks and admiration. (convulsiverecords.tumblr.com)

I'm going to talk about some small records now. Hippie Johnny doesn't dig the 7" format so much because it forces him to get up and flip records way too often for his always-stoned ass. He also doesn't dig it because he is a hippie after all, and the 7" is the punkest of all formats. Speaking of being the punkest, there's been a real short supply of bands who can claim that these days. But that's about to change now that Austin's WOMEN IN PRISON are on the scene. They've released a demo tape, had a track on a compilation and have now released their debut wax on the HozAc label. "Strange Waves" is the first song on it, so that's what we're calling it according to the rules. This band has former and current members of FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS, TOTAL ABUSE and THE YOUNG and they're lean and mean and a fine example the plain old raw punk rock that our ancestors played. Not weird-punk, not pop-punk, not garage-punk, not post-punk, not hardcore-punk, just p-u-n-k. Vintage '78-'83 moves, very reminiscent of the dumber Australian strains of the genre propagated by the likes of LEFTOVERS, CHOSEN FEW or RAZAR, which ultimately leads to some STOOGE-ian vibes all around and even some first wave Americana. This single is recorded just right, with loose and mean guitars (that do have a bit if Ginn-like roar), snotty and sneering vox and a real aggressive and belligerent approach. Things aren't masked by waves of reverb or overly lo-fi production, it's just all hanging out there in the wind. Tough stuff, get your leather jacket out of storage and take this baby for a ride. I'd also like to commend HozAc for releasing an actual punk record. (www.hozacrecords.com)

Another little ripper this month comes from Atlanta, home to many punk rockers including this GG KING guy, who used to play in an outfit called the CARBONAS, who were pretty punk in their own right. GG's latest single is referred to as the "Two Track Party Pack" EP, as it has two tracks that you can party to. One of them is actually an unreleased old CARBONAS tune called "Day Turns To Night" that GG and his band put through the exercises. It's a wonderful couple of minutes of the up-tempo hook-laden rock the 'boners were capable of. B-Side is a cover of the RALPHS "Drug Induced State" that is the best RALPHS cover you will ever hear. Really. A great song to begin with, which the band takes to another level. There's an LP already in the can from these cats, and it's going to really knock some people over, I promise. Even though there's only about five minutes of music on this thing, I can't recommend it enough. Friendly enough for the poppier kids and metal enough for real men as well. Euro import, bite the bullet and bite my ass. (www.redloungerecords.de)

COOL TAPE DEPT.: It's not very often that there's a local band that tickles my fancy, but there's a few I'm actually digging these days. One of them is BROWN SUGAR, who might just be the best unit in this town, and who might just be one of the better hardcore punk bands in the country as well. They have a new demo called *Songs About Birds* and it's a teaser for some upcoming singles and splits they have planned for 2011. A half-dozen gas-cookers in the Rust Belt Punk fashion, carried by a guitar player with glasses, a beard on bass, a foreigner on vox and a drummer who was once in a ska-punk band. If that line-up description doesn't have you reaching for your wallet right now I have no idea what's wrong with you. (www.feralkidrecords.com)

COOL LOCAL SINGLE DEPT.: Hey, I'm going to talk about another local band. I should just take this to the scene report section, but fuck that shit. Scenes are for queens. And PLATES are kings among men. They finally have a record out that hints at the power of their current incarnation and it is called *Taking Pictures of Poor People* and it's an EP made up of three songs about living in the world today. If you like FLIPPER or ANAL BABES or want the classic AmRep sound mixed up with some modern punk sounds, well have I got a record for you boy-o. Featuring past and current members of I OBJECT, REAGAN YOUTH and BROWN SUGAR, this little puppy will get you salivating for the upcoming LP. (www.feralkidrecords.com)

COOL SPLIT DEPT.: Have you been wondering what Eric from the OBLIVIANS has been up to lately besides releasing records, running one of the best stores in the country, playing reunion shows and being one of the most righteous dudes in the game today? Well, he's amassed a line-up of some of the heaviest dudes in the Memphis area and started a band called TRUE SONS OF THUNDER and their on one side of this split with a song called "Butt Bong" and it sounds like…wait for it…FLIPPER. But they *really* sound like Flipper. This song is a three-minute long car crash in slow-motion, with some guy reading the newspaper over it. Ridiculous. I heard they break stuff when they play live too. Hide the children. The other side of this black disc is from Alabama's finest, WIZZARD SLEEVE, and it's titled "Setting Fire To Your Loft". It has great lyrics (that I think are frighteningly autobiographical) and is teeming with organically grown mushroom-influenced death-synth-punk sounds with vocals straight from Sleazeville, USA. I mean, I really believe him when he says he's going to "take a shit on your bathroom floor". These synths sound like they were stolen from John Carpenter's non-existent score to *Deadbeat at Dawn*. I fucking hate split singles, but…(Jeth-Row Records)

COOL REISSUE DEPT.: I know this was probably already featured on Entertainment Tonight, but I just wanted to remind you scabs that CLOCKCLEANER's *Nevermind* is now finally out on vinyl after being released on CD-only by a devil-worshipper twelve moons ago.

It's about friggin' time. Thanks girls. (www.fandeathrecords.com)

That's all folks. I wish everyone luck at their Fantasy Baseball Drafts this year. Stay away from Chase Utley and make sure you lock at least one good closer with job security down somewhere in the middle rounds. Fishing on the waiver wire is fine, but sometimes those saves come at a high cost. Sure, you might pull a Matt Capps, but you can also pull a Mike McDougal and then watch your ERA get higher than Hippie Johnny. RIP DUKE SNIDER.

"Writing for a penny a word is ridiculous. If a man really wanted to make a million dollars, the best way to do it would be to start his own religion." –L Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology.

Hopefully, the observant and thoughtful among you will have realized immediately that last month's column was yet another April Fools prank. I am not trying to start my own religion. I'm working on an "I got fooled by *Maximumrocknroll*" t-shirt for anyone who actually sent in money to the Children of July's PO Box. Tongue-in-cheek as the article was, it was eerily prescient about a more insidious conspiracy to use the DIY punk scene to advance distinctly non-punk ideas, and I'm not talking about the Scion Garage Fest.

A couple of weeks ago, I had some friends from New York in town. They were here to perform as part of Noise Pop, an annual 'indie' music festival/music industry circle jerk here in San Francisco that really wishes it was South By South West. I vaguely remember when it started; I might have seen Jawbreaker play a Noise Pop show at one time, but my only definite memory of attending a Noise Pop event was seeing Roky Erickson a few years ago. In general I avoid any kind of music industry gatherings. To bastardize a cliché of Nazi Germany, "When I hear the words "noise pop", that's when I reach for my revolver." Any type of event that has more people with clipboards and laminated passes than actual music fans makes my blood boil. I start to feel like Keith Allen's character in *The Yob*: I envision a Bruce Banner transformation into a hooligan *Hulk*, shattering the smug middle class tranquility of the assembled publicists, promoters and label lackeys.

After the event my friends performed at, we all went across town to another venue to catch another Noise Pop bill front-loaded with local heavy hitters Grass Widow and Rank/Xerox, opening for Los Angeles duo No Age. The show kicked off with another LA band called Crazy Band, who had some interesting riffs and a decent guitar sound, but had apparently booked the tour before writing any songs. Oops! Rank/Xerox were great as usual, an x-acto intersection of the Middle Class and Mission Of Burma. They had minimal between-song interaction with the crowd, who were nonetheless completely on their side. The Grass Widows followed, and were equally on form. It was the first time I'd seen them perform "Mannequin" by Wire; their unique voices allow the song additional harmonies, and they really make it their own. I hope they record this version.

The headline act, No Age, came on to close out the night. I had only ever seen them once before (prior to any of their records) at a DIY show space in Oakland, although I have seen a few other bands the members have been in. I should perhaps mention that No Age's drummer, Dean Spunt, slept on my floor once while on tour with an earlier band. As I recall, he was a very pleasant and polite houseguest. If you're familiar with the band, or with the scene they represent (built around Los Angeles DIY venue The Smell) you'll know that they exude a relentlessly positive vibe. It's definitely a contrast with other punk rock scenes you might encounter around the world. Everyone I've encountered from that scene is well-scrubbed, energetic, encouraging, and smiling. On the night in question, No Age lived up to my preconceptions: The shiny, happy duo beamed from the stage, basking in the beatific noise generated by their MBV™ effects pedals; relishing the support of the equally shiny, equally happy all-ages crowd. For the length of their set, everything was cool with the world man… don't worry, be happy was the number one jam. I felt like I was missing something. From my position on the balcony over the crowd, it was like watching a TV show of a religious tent revival. Spunt bounced up and down on his drum stool, reminding me of nothing more than those scenes of Tom Cruise jumping up and down on Oprah's couch, spouting off on his appreciation for everything Scientology had brought him. The association niggled at my brain til the next day.

Gradually, the more I thought about it, the more the oppressive positivity of the Smell scene made sense. I'd actually been reading a lot about Scientology in *The New Yorker*, in an article about ex-Scientologist, Oscar-nominated director Paul Haggis. The article explains how many of today's successful actors and TV personalities are actually Scientologists, and they were almost all recruited to the religion through a particular stage school in LA. "What if," I though to myself, "the Smell and its bands were actually a front for recruitment of disaffected youth into the harmful cult that passes itself off as the religion of Scientology?"

I started digging around. The name of the band No Age may itself be a reference to Scientology: Operating Thetans (the name accomplished Scientologists give themselves to separate them from regular humans or "suppressive persons") are continually reincarnated and live for the length of the universe; as such, they are said to have "no age."

The band also claims to have recruited artist Rene Hell to tour with them after reading an ad in a Scientology newspaper. When they are not on tour, the members of No Age are thought to spend a lot of their free time skateboarding on the half-pipe they built in the backyard of their Silverlake mansion. An alleged frequent guest? Former professional skater, actor, and (you guessed it) Scientologist, Jason Lee. Coincidentally, No Age seem to have achieved an inordinate amount of success for a scrappy DIY skate-punk band; how many bands that have slept on your floor have played on *The Late Show with David Letterman*?

It's a well-known fact that Los Angeles is home to many celebrity Scientologists. It's believed that many of their kids attend shows at the Smell, and in fact, it's alleged that several Smell-related bands, including No Age, have performed at house parties for the kids of famous Scientologists like Tom Cruise and John Travolta. Ask yourself: why has The Smell managed to survive for so long in the face of aggressive gentrification of the downtown Los Angeles area, if not because of powerful friends in very high places?

How many kids that have gone to The Smell just to see some DIY punk rock have been gently persuaded that they should undergo a Dianetics personality test, hooked up to some cockamamie machine? How many have in turn become disconnected from their families and forced into a billion-year contract of indentured servitude as part of the Sea Org?

I didn't have much luck corroborating any of the above allegations: The Internet is awash with conflicting information on Scientology and the organizers at The Smell and the members of No Age are (unsurprisingly) silent on the subject. I don't wish to incite the wrath of the Scientologists' vast forces by writing any more on the subject.

"The only way you can control people is to lie to them"– L Ron Hubbard.

Patti when she shook when she bellowed. Vi when she rasped, when she called. Alice when she spun, when she clawed, when she raved. Poly when she counted, when her braces shone. Penelope when she strutted. Debbie when she didn't.

When I close my eyes I can see them all. I've got them carefully collected, these small charming glimpses. I keep them stored like stacks of little pictures in a flip-book, or more accurately, a thin reel of film spliced together. One that I play back when I need it, that I use to get through, to help get the words out. My personal instruction manual on how to take the stage.

I'm a shy ham. In theory I want to stand in the spotlight, in the sun. I've got verses boiling in my blood, I've got rhythms trying to shake loose, but when I get up there on stage it's different. I see dozen or hundreds of eyes fixed on

where I'm supposed to stand. I feel my lungs empty and refuse to fill up again. The magic that is music goes quiet inside me as I realize that I've got to perform. That's when the film reel rolls, the flickers of others who came before, other nervous adrenaline filled women made it work, and so can I.

I'm no natural. I don't even particularly want to get comfortable up there on stage. Don't want to get my signature move worked out, curl my biceps, tie scarves to my microphone stand, or whatever it is that happens when you jump the shark as a singer. The way I see it, I am just a vehicle for the words, a part of a band delivering a song. I don't want to become a caricature, a choreographed and exaggerated down version of the women who inspire me. I want to do what they did for their music. I want to rip it out of where it lives. I want to feel it. I want to share that weird transcendent moment when it comes tumbling out. I don't want to perform. I don't want an audience, I want witnesses.

It's easy to fall back on clichés when you are blinded by that spotlight. To think that if you just follow the script no one will really notice you, that it won't actually be you they are watching. That's just a form of hiding. I fight that desperate urge to escape, to be anyone but myself. I fight that urge by thinking of all the wonderful singular charming things people do on stage.

Judy when she laughs, when she makes, when she gyrates. Reina when she rages. Kaelen when she jumps, when she blurs. Michelle when she runs, when she crashes. Chanel when she squeaks, when she looms.

There is something electric about seeing someone you know, someone you admire do the thing you do. Inspiring doesn't really cover it. It not only makes me want to be better, it somehow enables me too.

I'm lucky to have such a wealth of women around me playing music, doing this shit too. There is nothing more intimidating than being the only woman performing a given role in a band in a show. You become like the representative of all women, a stand in. Those nights there is this extra added pressure to slay, to be better than you have before to say "we can do this just as well, we can excel." But who needs to be thinking about gender disparities, and the pressure of being a representative while trying to call on that primal thing that will make it great? Not me. Being one of a group sets you free to fuck up, and relieves the pressure that usually the cause of those fuck ups. Funny how that works.

It gets easier to ignore things like that in time, it gets easier and easier to focus on the task at hand, to forget everything else. But that very first moment, when its time to start. That is always the same for me. Nothing can prepare me for it. No amount of band practice, or singing to my dog, or can get me ready to face that moment. So I think about the women who've done it before, who are doing it now. The countless times each of them faced the quiet pause before the first song began. I think of them, I close my eyes and see each of them flit by for a second, and I fill my lungs with air.

For any of you who've contemplated screaming or singing your heart out, here the best guidance I've ever read on what its like to sing, what you have to do to prepare. It comes from one of my favorites, Julio Cortazar:

"Begin by breaking every mirror in the house.
Let your arms fall.
Regard the wall loosely, forget.
Sing one note, listen from the inside.
If you hear (but this will happen much later) something like a landscape immersed in fear, with bonfires in between the rocks, with semi-nude silhouettes on tiptoes, I believe you will be well on your way, the same if you hear a river where vessels painted in yellow and black descend, if you hear the taste of bread, the feel of fingers, the shadow of a horse…"

Do that, then look at the people around you, watch and be inspired. Look at the past, and look forward. Find out where inside you the songs live, pull them out one by one. Don't be afraid to share, other nervous adrenaline-filled punks made it work, and so can you.

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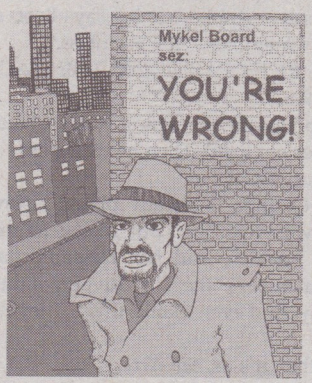
Some bands with women in front who are killing it right now: Tuberculosis, Weird TV, Agatha, Firebrand, Arctic Flowers, Verraterisch, Endemics, Sceptres, Street Legal, Criaturas, Snarlas, Ruidosa Inmundicia, No Statik, Swann Danger…

To get in touch: Tie a length of string to a tin can, tie the other end to arielawesome@gmail.com. Talk to me.



"My prayer for the women of the next millennium: have hard hearts; and learn how to kill." — Andrea Dworkin

"Nursing is great, Mykel." Donn tells me. He turns to Gwera.

"Should we tell him the bowel story?" he asks, before going ahead anyway.

"This is so wonderful," he continues. "We had this guy... an old guy... street crazy... really just a poor street bum... never saw a doctor... no teeth... scraggly gray beard... came in screaming. Stomach pain... horrible nausea. Later we find out he has an obstructed bowel... like a knot in your lower intestines. The shit can't get through. It builds up... then backs up."

I nod like it happens all the time.

"Course, the guy has to eat," says Donn. "And if you eat, the food turns to shit. And the shit goes down the large intestines. But it can't come out... it just piles on the old shit already down there. The guy eats more. That turns to shit and piles more on the old shit. Pretty soon it backs up into the small intestine... like traffic in front of a bridge toll... in rush hour."

Uh oh. I think I know what's coming.

"That small intestine is pretty long... about twenty feet... big as a house... still, there's a limit. It fills up...after the small intestine comes the stomach... This guy is there...on the gurney... dressed in hospital drag. He starts to gag... rumbling from the stomach... his neck muscles tighten... relax... tighten again... gray cheeks bulge... I get the puke tray... put it next to his head... Then it comes out. This huge brown turd... solid... like a junkie turd... right from his mouth... he's puking shit... backed up from his stomach..."

I feel like puking shit myself.

"It's not only one turd," he continues. "It's a series... each more viscous than the last... mixed with more stomach juices... digested... redigested... Gobs of brown coming from this guy's mouth."

I begin to taste my just-eaten tortilla... again.

The speaker is Donn, drummer of Sin Arte. He's a also nurse here in Arizona. Donn used to live in Connecticut. He's an old timer from the '80s hardcore scene.

He tells me we met at The Anthrax, before you were born. I forgot his band then. Citizen something or other I think. He's a funny guy, with my kind of sensibility. Besides being a nurse, he's a punkrock drummer in Tucson.

Before we get to the plot, you'll need to know some other characters in this story. I introduced them a couple months ago. Here's a quick review.

Gwera's real name is Berenice, she looks Irish and comes from Northern Mexico where the "GU" sound is pronounced like a W. (Like *Where a?*) Add to that, she's a great guitar player. Add to that she's smart and attractive.

Then there's BEEF, a big white guy who's a great cook. You met him in an earlier column too.

Beef is not in Sin Arte, my band for this trip, but he plays a part in the story. You'll see later.

Ivan is not Russian. His full name is something like Ivan Restokovich, but he's Mexican. More than one immigration agent accused him with the legal equivalent of "you're fucking with me," when he gave his name.

You also met him before, in an earlier column. He's the bass player for La Merma, maybe the most famous band from Sonora... the North Mexico state where the Sin Arte tour did not take place. (You can read about my Mexican adventures in my travel blog mykelsdiary.blogspot.com.)

While I was in Mexico, Ivan got kicked out of his Nogales apartment and had to move in with Gwera. Not a bad *had to*, if you ask me.

The original plan:

My Mexican friends have decided to put together a tribute band. The tributee? Me! Or at least my old band ARTLESS. They'll learn ARTLESS songs. I'll sing. We'll play half a dozen shows in Mexico and a couple in Arizona.

The new band, called Sin Arte, will tour with Cojoba, a Puerto Rican band based in New York. Together, we'll play with a buncha Mexican bands, many of them on the revival circuit, getting back together just for us. Yowsah!

Having encouraged a boycott of Arizona for

its ethnic cleansing law... requiring the police to stop and ID anyone *suspected of being an illegal immigrant*, I'm a little hesitant to play in Arizona. My image is a place filled with intolerance. Anyone a different race? Ship 'em to Mexico. Different ideas? Ship 'em to California.

Gilberto assures me that I'll be playing with Mexicans, so it's okay. *And*, in Southern Arizona I'll be playing FOR Mexicans, so it's even better. In the tug of war between ego and morals... morals loses. I agree to do the tour.

As it turns out, *Sin Arte* listened to ARTLESS songs only "once or twice," and never rehearsed them. Also as it turns out, every show in Mexico is canceled. Why is a long story. It's in the blog.

That leaves two shows. One in Tucson. One in Flagstaff. The Tucson show is at *The Dry River Collective*. The one in Flagstaff is at *The Infoshop*. Both spots are ***alternative***.

Being ***alternative***, I figure both places will be pretty intolerant. That means I'll have the first chance to really piss off a live audience since *Artless* quit playing in 1998. I wonder if I can do it. Do I still have my chops? Maybe I lost the devil inside... like Mick Jagger in Performance.

We have time for one rehearsal. Four ARTLESS songs: *Aahrg, We Want Nuclear War, Do the No*, and *Beer is Better Than Girls Are*... The last is our *"hit."* It's a satire on those poor guys who can't get laid and drown their sorrows with the sorry excuse *beer is better anyway*. I took the words from an old poster/t-shirt... been around for years... I just made it rhyme. *That one*, the PC folks should actually like.

I figure I gotta change the other song names. Make 'em more offensive. It's punkrock and nobody can understand the lyrics anyway. *We Want Nuclear War* becomes *Bombs, Not Food. Aahrg!* (that's the only word in the song) becomes *Mata Los Gringos* (apologies to NOFX). Everything else stays the same.

FLASH AHEAD:

We enter DRY RIVER. It's empty... except for a not-so friendly women at the door. She's tall and skinny... died black hair and a severe Nurse Ratched face. I'm surprised to see that Beef is also here... hanging outside... having a smoke with some locals.

"Yo Beef!" I say. "Wachu doin' here? Come to see us play?"

"Mykel," he says, "I'm playing tonight... with *Pop Gestapo*. We're opening for you. Same band... only me singing instead of you."

Walking up the street is *Cojobo*. Javier has a shopping bag full of Tecate beer. He hands me one. He hands one to Beef. He hands one to this sixteen year old kid with a skateboard. He hands another to this attractive boy in very short shorts.

Nurse Rached comes to the door and taps him on the shoulder. "Sorry," she says, "but we can't allow drinking here. The police will shut us down."

He stops... for a minute or two... then starts handing out the beer again. Aaaaaoooogah! It'll be a club full of drunken' sixteen year olds. Yeah!

Inside, I set up the merch table, then look around the crowd. There are a couple femmy white boys in short shorts with skull make-up painted on their faces. I wonder if it's a local fashion. Then I remember today is *Day of The Dead*. For dead adolescents, they sure look good! Let's hope Javier can get them drunk enough.

Inside, there's no stage, just a floor area... marked off with amps at one end and a drumkit at the other... punkrock.

Slowly, more people come into the club. Another guy with a bicycle and skull make-up. Several girls in wool sweaters... torn at the sleeves. A group of youngsters: a girl with a short purple dress over bright red tights, a muscular blond boy, and the only colored guy in the place (besides Cojoba's drummer)... a good-looking skinny boy about 18.

By now there are about 50 people inside— not a Mexican among them. At the door waits a jar for *contributions*. People pay (or don't) what they want for the show. It's voluntary... depends on good will. Not much goes into the jar.

Ok, it's time for *Pop Gestapo*... a buncha noise and Beef. Beef sings between sips from a glass of water. There's a little moshing. Then come the fire crackers... then the smoke bomb... rolling along the floor... spewing gray smoke... some people run... others laugh... there's shouting.

A guy... scraggly beard... long hair... young Jesus type... comes up to Beef and shouts at him.

"Okay," he says, "the show's over. Pack up. Go home."

Beef starts to argue with him. Nurse Rached joins the fray.

"You're jeopardizing the space," she screams.

"It's only a smoke bomb," says Beef, sipping from his water glass. "It's harmless."

"YOU'RE JEOPARDIZING THE SPACE," she screams louder.

Beef pours the remaining water, about half a glass, over her head. Then he walks out.

Next up is Cojoba.

Club Gestapo is already pissed at Javier for giving away free beer. But seeing as the band sings in Spanish, and has Hispanic (and one Negro) members, the Dry River politburo lets them play. And even thanks them. They do a fine set.

And then it's us, ***Sin Arte***.

Mata Los Gingos has the crowd moshing, as does *Bombs, Not Food*. Then it's time for ***Beer***, the paean to guys who can't get laid.

No matter how cunning their stunts... with a girl there's that time of the month... the difference of course with a beer... it's good every day of the year...

The crowd stops dancing. Over on the right, the young moshers are standing and smiling. Nurse Rached and her pals stand, arms folded. They are not smiling.

Beer is better than girls are... I don't care where their little curls are... when you're out with the boys at a bar... a beer will wait in the car... yes a beer will wait in the car.

The cool thing about this song is that it's orchestrated so you can hear all the lyrics. No music during the verses, light Omm Pah Pah, German bar music during the chorus.

A beer will give you good head... it goes down easy in bed...

Screaming comes from somewhere. I can't make out the words, but they don't sound very friendly.

Handle it, it won't say Stop it... *You know if you're the first to pop it...*

"Stop the song. Stop the song now!" comes the screaming voice. It is not from Nurse Rached, but from another girl, tall, skinny, wearing a black and white knit sweater and a tuke.

I continue, *The label comes off with no fight... it doesn't say* ***headache tonight***.

"Stop it! Stop the song!"

I hand her the microphone. Creatively, she screams into it.

"STOP IT! STOP THE SONG!"

Then, the same guy who talked to Beef walks up to me. "Okay," he says, "the show's over. Pack up. Go home."

He must say that a lot.

I think, "Yes!! I can still do it. I can get us thrown off stage. I've still got it!"

Donn has it even better.

"Wow!" he says. "Thrown off the stage *twice* in less than two hours. Wadda great night!"

As we pack up, the three young moshers come over. The colored guy says, "You guys were great. Too bad those people can't put up with another point of view."

Each of them shakes my hand and tells me what a good time they were having. I'm thinking, "maybe not all Arizona non-Mexicans are bad."

"We're from Utah," says the colored guy. "We want you to come and play. We won't throw you off."

They came special to the show... to see us. From U-fucking-tah!! I love 'em!

But Arizona? Arizona is *fucked*. If you go there (you shouldn't!), hang with Mexicans... or Donn or Beef. Other whites are... I donno... just bad. Flagstaff will change my mind about the state... a bit. But I don't have space to tell you about that show. You'll have to wait for the blog.

The bottom line:

DO NOT PLAY at DRY RIVER in Tucson. They are worse than a bunch of Christians in their censorship. With the sense of humor of a cancer patient, they prohibit what they don't like... without even understanding it. If you play there, you will support intolerance as bad as any xenophobic Arizonan on the street.

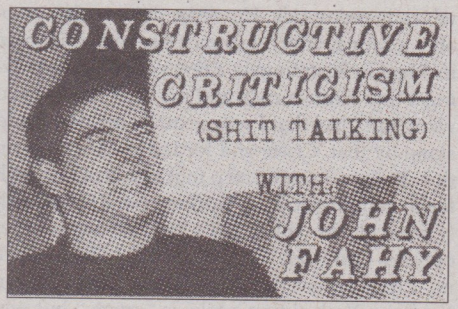
DO PLAY at THE INFOSHOP in Flagstaff. Although in Flagstaff, I think of it as a kind of Navajo reservation. It is NOT really Arizona. The Navajos who run the place have a punk band of their own, *Let The World Die*. They are as open— and friendly— as a box of puppies— terrific people. See 'em! book 'em when they come to your town! And if you're passing through Flagstaff, play at their club. Then get the hell out of the state.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column]

—>Of course my last column, about the Jews and the *blood libel* was my annual April Fool's column. Don't worry George; I'll never reveal the REAL SECRET of the Jews.

—>*He's right dept:* Sid Yiddish, my pal and proofreader, complained that I was being unfair to white Arizonans who oppose ethnic cleansing and are pretty decent people. These W.A.'s

include Sid's parents. He's right. Roger Armstrong also lives in Arizona. And he's a pretty cool guy. The state still should be boycotted, but the residents should not be 100% condemned.



TWO PUNK INTERVIEWS, ONE SPLENDID COLUMN

Feeling inspired by Nev's comments in an IFB Records interview I did about supporting punks that put serious work in, I decided to have a few small chats with punks that are really active in their respective scenes to highlight what they're doing. Rather than reporting on what these people are up to, I figure it's best to go straight to the source and have them explain. Meghan Minior, from Western Massachusetts, and Amelia Eakins, from New York, are both tireless, always dug into some projects and their amped-ness for punk is constantly inspiring to witness.

Meghan Minior

So you're in a few bands, AMPERE, FOREIGN OBJECTS and SIAMESE TWINS, as well as working on a solo project called MOMS, right? Am I missing any others? What's going on with all of these?

Both AMPERE and FOREIGN OBJECTS have LPs coming out soon and FOREIGN OBJECTS also just had a new 7" come out on Dirt Cult Records. Siamese Twins has been busy writing songs and should have a tape out hopefully sometime this summer. Moms has definitely been on the backburner because other bands/projects have had so much going on—I haven't had much time to work on solo stuff but I plan on working on it more this spring/summer/next fall. There are a few other project bands in the works as well—I recorded vocals for a project band with some friends in Boston recently and I played bass and did half the vocals for an Angry Samoans-style project band called INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES that is still being finished.

You have a venue in Western Mass, The Flywheel...tell me a bit about how that got set up and how it works.

The Flywheel is a collectively and all volunteer run, not-for-profit space, which aims to build community and give artists of all types the opportunity to craft, practice, and perform their work in an environment where creativity is valued over profit. In the spring of 1998, Cindy Bow and Helen Harrison founded Valley Arts and Music Alliance (VAMA), a grassroots collective in which artists would help each other produce free, all-ages shows that reflected the their own creative visions rather than the values of the music industry establishment. VAMA attracted like-minded people, most of whom were already doing similar things in their own homes, dorm basements, and any other place they could find. Together the group produced over two-dozen shows through December of 1998, when a friend and supporter found a permanent space in Easthampton, MA—a vacant cabinet store owned by a local doctor. As word of the space spread, more people joined, and Flywheel was born. The Flywheel opened in March of 1999 and almost a year ago we moved into a larger new space right in downtown Easthampton, MA!! It is really easy to get involved at the Flywheel and there are so many different ways to volunteer. I have been booking shows there and doing general volunteering since 2003.

Dead Air Studios is in your home, which I'm told is in utter wilderness. Is it just you and Will K. living there? What's it like, I imagine the studio stays pretty busy and that you get a steady diet of punk through that alone. How much work do Will and yourself put into that? Is it way inspiring to be able to record whenever you want?

Dead Air Studios is Will's recording studio that he has been running for over ten years now. We moved into a house in the middle of the woods over two years ago and we both really love it! I don't do any recording of bands in the studio (that is all Will), but it is always nice to be able to practice and record at home. Having a constant rotation of bands in the studio is great, you get to hear new bands and records that your friends are working on as they are putting them together and it is definitely positive having so much creativity happening in the house.

Amelia Eakins

New York has so much going on right now. You've booked shows at ABC No Rio and now book shows under the name Undead Volume. What is your experience with booking gigs in Manhattan and Brooklyn, and is one any easier than the other? How have the shows at ABC and throughout NY been lately?

Booking gigs in NYC is a pain! I had a chit chat with a guy who owns an all ages venue in the Lower East Side this weekend about doing shows at his venue and got shot down. He laid it out to me as follows: the bar makes no money, people bring in outside booze, and he doesn't want to deal with the cops. I get it from a business stand point—there's no point in doing a punk/hardcore show for him—he makes no money and the show is a liability. DIY collective spaces have issues with things getting broken and punks being disrespectful to them in their own living space. Can't blame 'em for shooting down most shows I run by them. Right now, Manhattan's out of the question—squats, community centers, and artists spaces are getting shut down or being forced to move to outer boroughs due to rapid gentrification in Manhattan. On a lighter note, 538 Johnson in Brooklyn—especially Mike from NOMOS—has been really helpful with two of the four shows for Nick "Poot" Mardanes of ABSURD SYSTEM that I and the scene as a whole did to raise money for him, and after his passing, for his family.

Punks don't really live in Manhattan anymore, so most raw punk shows are in Brooklyn at shitty bars that tolerate unruly behavior. I don't know how shows at ABC No Rio have been since I stopped booking there this past summer. There haven't been any shows I've wanted to go to, so I haven't gone. Last I looked at a line up, there was a noise/math rock show or something? Not a "punk/hardcore" matinee lineup as my ideal Saturday afternoon, but if that's how they see fit to utilize the last "punk" all ages, DIY space in Manhattan, then so be it. The shows throughout NY, mainly Brooklyn, have been incredible. Between Ian Dickson, Dan Osterich, myself, and the kids at 538—there is always a decent show every weekend except for during the height of winter when touring season is dead. The NY punk scene is alive and thriving. A lot of scenes are starting to cross over on line-ups, and I think the scene as a whole is becoming less divided. NYC is so big that it's very easy to stick to your specific sub-genre of punk and recently I've seen a lot of neat, diverse line-ups.

Your band CERVIX has a very harsh, dark sound. Was this any kind of agreed direction or just the natural direction for everyone involved? Fran seems to be evil from birth when playing the guitar...

The story of CERVIX is a strange one…it started as a joke of sorts with me and Mateo from DAWN OF HUMANS wanting to start a COMES-style band. Mateo was going to drum and Fran was always on guitar. After the three boys we were originally in the band with were wanting to do stuff like cover NEGATIVE APPROACH, CERVIX kind of disbanded into me and Fran veering more toward the SACRILEDGE type sound CERVIX has been compared to now. We like NEGATIVE APPROACH, don't get us wrong, but we didn't want to be in a hardcore band. I still don't know what we sound like, but apparently chick vocals + heavy riffs= SACRILEGE. Anyway, we got Dave from ABSURD SYSTEM to play drums. Then one day when we were practicing, NOMAD was practicing in the same space across the hall. Tye from NOMAD said we sounded like SACRILEGE and seemed stoked on it when he ran into us after practice. We had just lost our bass player to rehab—so we asked Tye to play bass. He said yes and has regretted it ever since.

So basically, we have four people in a band playing instruments they usually don't play, or in a way they're not used to, and trying to hold a band together. Anything that has come together since the beginning has been an uncalculated miracle. Fran is one badass guitar player. I remember when she first started playing and she'd spend countless hours practicing everyday—she hasn't been playing for that long and now she's writing whole songs for a band. She's really dedicated. In regard to the dark, raw sound that we have, I think it was natural. Fran comes from a more crust/metal background, Dave comes from a more straight hardcore/punk background, and Tye and I listen to a lot more raw, noise, '82 type punk, so we have a motley crew that has no direction, but a weird sound that just happened. We're a total fluke, if you call that a "natural direction."

Do you think some of your CERVIX lyrics are inspired by what you see in your work in a social/public sphere? It seems like New York politics would have to impact what you see on a daily basis at your job.

I work with low-income elderly in lower Manhattan, and I do my best to leave work at the door at the end of the day. But, the song "Holy War" was inspired by a Jewish client and I having a conversation about how the bloodiest wars are holy wars and many of the great tragedies throughout history that have been rooted in religion. Another song was inspired by a friend of mine giving birth to a kid with severe health problems as the result of her partner's father having been exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Dioxin contamination is passed down for seven generations from the original person who was exposed. "Dioxin Defect" was inspired by that tragedy. Even our name had to do with another friend of mine coming back with an abnormal pap smear suggesting she had cervical cancer. I got the call during band practice and hence the name CERVIX. In regard to New York politics, Bloomberg's a total jerk off, but all of our mayors have been pains in the ass for as long as I can remember. Giuliani can be credited with our current shortage of venues thanks to his revival of the Cabaret Law while he served as mayor, which was originally enacted in the Prohibition era to crack down on speak-easies. Giuliani started the trend of our disappearing venues, but Bloomberg is responsible for the rapid gentrification of our city, causing a lot of venues and rad spaces to continue to go under. "System Slaves" mentions Bloomberg and our disappearing middle class here in NYC. A lot of the fuel behind my lyrics has to do with my everyday life and the things people around me are dealing with or the atrocities committed by our government here and overseas.

—Thanks to Meghan and Amelia for talking. Look up the Flywheel and Undead Volume for show bookings in NY and MA. Until next month, check humancrushrecordings.blogspot .com for P-RAM tour dates. Tour begins April 29th and ends May 21st, going up the east coast and through the Midwest. See you then.

By the time this issue comes out, it will have been a little more than a year since Bruce Roehrs has left this earth. His absence from my life has made more of an impact on me than I would have thought. If I find myself in a situation—say I make some rather reactionary comments regarding, this or that, and cant help but think to myself, "what would Bruce do?" Nine times out of ten I take a long hard look at it and go with what I think he would do. The best thing about this philosophy is that no matter what I do, I know that Bruce would support me. Even if he didn't like what I said or did. The man would have pulled me aside and talked to me about it and he either would have seen my point or not. Regardless he would have given me a hug once it was all said and done. He was a friend, a mentor and one of the most generous people I have ever had a pleasure of knowing. I miss him dearly. Rumor has it that I will be getting very, very drunk around the 17th of March. Bruce would have wanted it that way. Bruce loved four things best as I can remember: rock 'n' roll, a good steak, a bottle of Jameson, and Antiseen. Miss ya buddy—three outta four ain't bad. Randy and I used to call his phone after he passed away just to hear his voicemail. Goddamn I could listen to that man talk forever.

Ok, the bummer shit is over. There is so much more that I could write about Bruce, but frankly it's hard for me to do so. I figure we should move on.

Back to motherfucking punk rock. It's great ain't it? Summer's coming up faster then you know it and I'm really trying to get my beach "bod" in order. You know what I'm talking about, talking bout a little thing called the "Usher Cut," better known as the "D'Angelo." Talking 'bout some fucking calf muscles. An eight-pack you could wash your punk vest on. Goddamn biceps. Buff dude shit. Ted Nugent shit.

Getting older has taught me a few things. One: it fucking sucks. My back hurts, my legs hurts, my pubes are going grey faster then my beard. Shit's weak. Two: people in my age group no longer think my "schtick " is charming or endearing anymore. Let's face facts: Sleeping on the couch at Timmy's place ain't exactly gonna get me anywhere in the lady department or the respect from my peers department for that matter. Nor is being a bouncer at the premier live music venue here in Austin. Bartender sure. That'll get you laid. Being a human punching bag for $10 an hour ain't. Three: as every year goes by, I have less and less faith in humanity. Taking the bus to work and we drive past an abortion clinic being picketed. Goddamnit. Seeing some SUV driving cunt (note, this a non gender specific use of the word cunt) park in a handicap spot at the REI, goddamnit. Mardi Gras, ugggggghhh. While we're on the subject, what would a disabled person need to acquire at REI? Rock climbing shoes? Not trying to be a prick, just curious. What I'm trying to say is that the only constant in this world is "me" and I fucking suck, so its time to get my shit together.

Working out.

I just don't see this happening. For as long as I can remember I have a very strict "only run if being chased" policy, and I've been able to make it this far in life with running a single foot. Don't care if a car is coming at me, Logan don't run for no one. I see it like this—if the situation ever presents itself where I need to haul ass, I'll have so much energy saved up to make Jackie Joiner Kersee look like my grandmother, and she's all types of dead. That one's out. Weight lifting doesn't really have much of an appeal either. Shit looks *exausting*. Right? There's gotta be some other way of getting ripped without totally wearing yourself out. Jesus that shit looks terrible. There *is* usually a hot tub at the gym, which is pretty sick. However there is also probably a sauna, which I cannot support, due to an incident in Scandinavia a few years back involving a tiny Finnish cock and me. Call it what you want, but I feel that I was sexually assaulted and stand by that. Cissie and Jordan can back me on this. To date, I cannot step foot inside of one with feeling all dirty. Ok, so working out doesn't really seem like my thing. Let's look into some other options. Can I ride a bike? Yes. Do I like it? Fuck no. I'm a grown up. That means driving a car. Yes a car. Yeah riding a bike is "green " but you know what? So is recycling and fuck that, too. Digging in the trash like an animal. You crazy. Being socially irresponsible, selfish and lazy is the new black, pass it on.

Diet

Uhhhhh. How can a put this the right way? Oh, fuck it, my diet consists of the following things: Frozen pizzas, Dr. Pepper, tacos, nachos, candy, bagel chips (garlic flavored), goldfish crackers (cheddar flavored), and bacon. These aren't the only things I know how to cook; they are just the only foods I like eat. Now, if someone puts something in front of me that they slaved over, of course it would get eaten and enjoyed. That being said, I would never put that kind of effort into something for just myself (maybe a girl I was trying to impress, however guaranteed it would be a half ass attempt). I'd be happy with a fucking hot pocket and a Camel. Tried the vegan thing for a bit, and man that was a long couple days. The vegetarian thing lasted a long fucking time. Literally years, which even blows my mind to this day. Somehow I actually ate worst as a vegetarian. Beats the fuck out of me how I did, but I think its safe to say that I was a pizza and bread type of guy even back then. Could a person such as myself eat a little better? Probably. Will that happen? No. Mainly because the urge to have that "beach bod" is outweighed by my urge to eat cheeseburgers and candy. That's the motherfucking facts.

Smoking.

Cigarettes are $7 a pack here, for the good ones anyway. Ain't trying to roll my own. I pay children in small, undeveloped countries pennies on the dollar to do that shit for me. A couple things about smoking: It makes you look cool, makes work more tolerable, and has the ability to help you appear more mature. Sure, that's an ignorant thing to say, but there's lots of ignorant things to say and I damn near appreciate all of them. There's something about the mind frame of a smoker that gets me off. It's that death wish you gotta have to really make it in the smoking world. Sure we all know it's gonna kill us, we just don't give a fuck. Does it smell terrible? Couldn't tell ya. If you smoke all the time you can't really smell anything anyway. What an overrated sense right? Smell, who cares? The best part about sex is finishing and lighting one up. Well that, and the release you feel after crying your eyes out on the shoulder of yet another

confused lover.
Send bullshit to Ldworrell@gmail.com

METHADONE BLUES

"Stayin' clean in NYC is really fuckin' tricky when you're trying piss pretty for the Governeur clinic!"

I left NYC a few weeks back after three years in the city. It was time for change. I was spiraling out of control, stalking the streets like a scared wounded animal. The pressure kept building inside me and it was only a matter of time before I cracked in a dramatic fashion, like those steam pipes that blow up whole city blocks when they rupture beneath the city.

In the past I used my music as a release, but the three years I'd spent strung out on heroin had really done a number on my ability to create. I had gotten on the methadone program, but I was still struggling. I was surrounded by dope. Addiction is a communicable disease. Many of the people I played music with were also struggling with their own addiction to heroin and also finding it hard to create. Those who weren't using were finding it frustrating to work with us junkies, although it seemed they couldn't piece together exactly why. We'd simply gotten flaky, started showing up late (after "waiting for [our] man"), and a couple people had gotten so far out that they'd simply fall asleep in the middle of songs. When we weren't nodding, we were often cranky or unreliable.

For our part, we were also frustrated. It seemed like our straight friends couldn't really relate anymore. Most of us felt a great deal of shame over what we were going through, and those of us who didn't were alienating the only people we could relate to when we'd discuss our personal lives with our straight friends, so we eventually had to start making choices. We'd rather avoid those who weren't involved then push away the only people we felt understood us, and more importantly the only people we could turn to when we were sick or needed help scoring.

Once we closed ourselves off shit got real dark. Among those that I was closest too, two of them had girlfriends who started turning tricks. They started doing private "fetish" work through Craig's List when they lost their jobs in the dungeons they worked at when it was discovered they were junkies or when they attempted to bypass their employers and start workin' on their own. Another was sent up to Riker's Island on a nearly weekly basis, sometimes spending over a month at a time there. His "hustle" was stealing baby formula from stores and selling it back to a local bodega two blocks from my place in the heart of Southside which is the only neighborhood in the city I found where you can still buy dope on the street. I got sent to the Tombs myself when I got popped selling weed to an undercover cop on the LES. I knew it was coming. Seasoned heads can feel it in the air. If I hadn't been dopesick, I never would have been there in the first place. I spent several hours sweatin' bullets in the back of an unmarked van with cuffs so tight it damaged the nerves in my hand causing my thumb on my right side to go numb for nearly a year. After driving around for a while trying to knock out the sweep they were performing they eventually popped this Puerto Rican fresh outta prison for dealing. He'd been out less than a week and the first thing he did when he was in the back of the van with me was shove a couple "books" of unstamped dope up his ass... I only know it was unstamped because I snorted a couple "pages" hours later when we finally got thrown in with the general population and he tossed me a couple for keeping my mouth shut and acting lookout for 'em as he got himself off on the toilet. The Tombs in Manhattan are a disgusting place to visit. It wasn't the first time I saw the inside of a jail cell, but it was quite unlike what I was used to back in the Midwest. No place to sit down, nowhere to sleep, locked in a cage overcrowded with pushers, crackheads, killers, perverts and the most foul shitter in the western hemisphere.

"When you do crime, you should know, you may goto jail,
and when you're there you eat, and shit into a pail,
and where you shit there is no seat, you sit where people piss,
and you know they're watching you, cause that's just how it is
jail shits, jail shits – they're watching me, they're watching me – jail shits!"
—Zone 13 Rejects "Jail Shits"

Like most junkies I'd wanted to quit for a long time, but it's not an easy process. I'd gotten on methadone, but I was still hanging with the same crowd. We were all "trying" to quit. I spent three months off dope during the summer hitting up the methadone clinic every morning, working a straight job and trying to get my shit together. Then I got the call that my father was institutionalized after walking into a police station and telling the cops he was going to off himself after my mother filed for a divorce days before my wife and I were to have our wedding celebration back home with them, both their families and all my old friends.

I saw a pattern developing. My grandmother divorced my grandfather when I was fifteen years old. He died shortly thereafter. He had once been rather successful, owning and operating a lumber business that his father had started from scratch. There was something about the guy that rubbed people the wrong way. Back in the '40s he used to wear his hair in a close cropped mohawk and wore chains on his motorcycle boots so that people could hear him coming. He'd fight people in the streets. I don't know much about his history or what made him the way he was, but when I was just a newborn he picked me up out of my mother's arms and whispered into my ear "You're an asshole. Your father is an asshole. I am an asshole. Everyone in whole world is an asshole." then he handed me back and commented on the fact that it looked as if I "carried the weight of the world on my shoulders." Perhaps I just had to take a shit. Growing up I often butted heads with my grandfather on issues. He didn't take no shit from no one; a trait I always admired despite our differences, and a trait that led to his downfall. The rest of his family had given up on him during his last couple years. As my father was "his father's son," it was left up to him to help him while he was on his way out, and since I was still in town then, I got dragged along as well at times and witnessed firsthand the deleterious effects that chronic alcoholism had wracked upon his mind. He had wet-brain. When he was finally hospitalized, I was there with him. His body had given out completely and his vital functions were performed by machines. I watched as he struggled blind in the face of his creator for the power and dignity to sign off and fade away.

In many ways my father was following directly in his footsteps, and I myself was catching up with my father. Growing up I resented some of the "Boy Named Sue" shit my father pulled on me trying to toughen me up for this world. It's traumatic for an effeminate pre-adolescent male struggling with his sexuality to have his father lead his friends in pointing while chanting "femme!" Back then I was not strong or experienced enough to take his advice to "punch [them] in the throat, then kick [them] in the knee" when I'd endure the daily beatings on the playground. But what could he do? He'd gone through the same things himself when he was my age, sometimes by the fathers of the same kids who regularly tormented me. Like his own father who traveled the US by car during my father's childhood trying to find clients around the country, my own father was rarely home making his way through Europe, Asia and eventually the Soviet Union trying to branch the company out into the international market.

My grandfather was an asshole; he refused to listen to anyone else. He knew no compromise. My own father took his stand in his own way with his shaggy hair and jeans instead of the preferred suit when he was meeting with international businessmen. In the yuppified '80s, for someone from a relatively small local company this was considered pretty risky. Professions have standards, and when you reject them you risk your own position and reputation. Eventually, my father was pushed from the family company and in a last ditch effort to save face, his marriage and his family he sold everything we owned and moved us to a small city in provincial Siberia, east of the Ural mountains and north of Kazakhstan. It was a radical move, but the kind expected from a man who at the age of thirteen ran away from an international Boy Scout Jamboree in Scotland to spend six months as a runaway hitchhiking across Europe. It was the kind of move that would impress my mother, a former card carrying member of the Communist Party whose favorite book was

Crime and Punishment and was going to school to become a labor lawyer when my father accidentally knocked her up 'causing her to drop out of college, marry my father and move up into the forests of Northern WI where they had me.

...

This story is not over. It will be continued... I hope. You just never know. Especially if like me your need for danger makes you like a moth attracted to flame, you will get burned. I've been losing friends and family to drugs for over half my life but it took turning thirty and getting married for it to really open my eyes to all the beautiful and talented people that we were losing in vain. We are a broken, diseased people. Punk was not so much a lifestyle I chose, as it was genetic and nurtured by my experiences at home and in the outside world. I was raised to be strong and defiant—to question authority and to speak my mind. I grew up around punks (my mother's brother sang for Germaine Shepard and the Police Dogs and The Johnnies (whose "I Keep Myself Right" single I am still trying to replace if anyone out there stumbles upon a copy), and her cousin was the drummer of both Moral Disgust and Rebel Waltz.), which may be why I was attracted to and hung out with the several-years-my-senior-skateboarders in the neighborhood when I was six or seven years old. But even without them there was still my goth-punk babysitter in the Misfits shirts, and my buddy's older brother with the JFA stickers. By the time I was nine years old I owned three DK and one COC LP's in addition to the "acid rock" (as my mother called it) I'd steal from my parents record collection: Doors, AC/DC's *Back In Black*, Iron Butterfly and eventually Sabbath.

I've always had a hard time relating to those punks who did well in school, and who got off on the happy-go-lucky love songs of the pop punk that dominated North East WI's scene during the '90s. To me they were all late comers, and never really earned it through fire like my buddies and I did. They never had knives pulled on them or had their noses broken or their teeth knocked out for being "punk," and to me that meant that they just fuckin' weren't. Of course this kind of thinking only led to more alienation and burned bridges driving me further outside of the community and into the underworld of addiction. There were times I was clean, a pacifist and helped build a strong local DIY community. But then the alienation and disillusionment I felt working with people I felt did not understand me would always bring me back to the Slow Death.

If you are already using, make sure you are educated in harm reduction, there are resources available to you to help you use in the safest way possible, but ultimately there is no such thing as safety when it comes to heroin and other hard and IV drugs. It's simply a matter of time before your number is called. An ex-girlfriend of mine told me shortly after we met "Junkies die, that's what we do." She's now facing hard time on a homicide charge for "helping out" a friend. There is absolutely nothing fucking romantic about having your arm amputated, spending your life in prison, or traumatizing those who love you by dying from a drug overdose. Trauma, like addiction and psychosis is a communicable disease.

AGAINST IRONY, FOR SOLIDARITY

In London, there is a kind of hegemonic style exercised over vast swathes of youth culture that reinforces mainstream capitalist values through excessive use of irony. I will argue here that this represents a fear of speaking out against injustice, and that in the wake of the coalition government's spending cuts, youth culture urgently needs to move beyond this trope. Extreme postmodern irony as peddled by *Vice* magazine and its shabbier imposters cannot work in our present political moment if we are to take up any form of resistance. Irony, at the worst end of the spectrum I am alluding to, functions to permit the de-humanisation of the vulnerable by the ruling class (I'm thinking here of *Bumfights*, Terry Richardson's aesthetic and more generally the endless fascination with the shock value of drugs, poverty and violence). Largely depoliticized and supportive of bourgeois, capitalist values, this culture is only able to take up serious subject matter through a context that is usually abroad, othered and held at a geographic arms length (heavy metal band in Iraq etc).

I don't want to hammer the anti-*Vice* (etc.) point beyond this introduction as I don't think it is terribly important. Such products are symptoms of late capitalism and unfortunately they serve to obfuscate what the target is, and where a plan of action might spring from. Further critique won't get us very far, and as pisstakes of "hipster culture" (Look at this fucking hipster blog etc.) proliferate they fail to articulate the class basis of gentrification, or present an adequate politics to counter the ironic, blasé, inertia amongst youth. I want to quote Alex Callinicos in order to underscores how the "ironic" procapitalist and sexist agenda perpetrated by that particular cultural canon assists in pushing political change further and further down the agenda.

"One consideration behind the frequent claims made for Postmodern 'wit' and 'irony' seems to be that the collapse of belief in the possibility or desirability of global political transformation leaves us with nothing better to do that playfully parody what we can no longer take seriously."

This parody is devastating in so far as it acts as a buttress for apathy towards political struggles in the UK (as I said, we can fetishize modes of resistance abroad as chic but there is little glamorous about struggles at home). This has to change and we need a strong conception of solidarity in order to get over this impotent parodic tendency in our culture (I'm thinking mostly of "ironic," laddish sexism in the context of *Vice*). Without restoring belief in political action and change, we may as well roll over and apathetically accept the coalition government's recent Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and the further decimation of the welfare state borne out of the cuts.

Vitally, the CSR will, as many campaigners have pointed out, disproportionately affect women. The Fawcett Society have made a legal challenge to the coalition government's initial emergency budget, resting on the fact that George Osborne did not undertake an Equality Impact Assessment prior to the new economic measures. We know the government's proposed cuts will hit women hardest in terms of the attack on the public sector (both jobs and welfare). Massive cuts to public sector spending will cause job losses of more than half a million, 300,000 of which are jobs held by women. Overall, forty percent of female workers in the UK are employed by the public sector and it is partially the expansion of that workforce which has encouraged increased numbers of women to enter employment in the last two decades. This is borne out of the public sector's comparably supportive infrastructure for female workers in contrast with the private sector. Moreover, the CSR is also unsurprisingly regressive in its inability to value work which does not produce financial value. The old feminist argument that housework and child care, or care work in a broader sense should be paid is already resurfacing in the wake of welfare cuts which effectively cut that which masquerades as pay for many carers.

The forty percent reduction in the housing budget ensures that social housing tenants will turn more and more to private landlords, who under new proposals are now able to charge at eighty percent of market rates. London will change drastically, in the course of which homelessness will rise alongside slum living conditions as the poor are pushed to the periphery. The obliteration of the principles of social housing has even led our Conservative mayor, the abhorrent Boris Johnson, to accuse the coalition of a kind of social cleansing akin to Kosovo.

This is why I want to argue that feminist politics that focused on single issues such as pornography and lap dancing clubs need to move beyond blaming male customers, managers and producers alongside female workers in crude gender determinist terms. At this point we need a broad base of resistance and a shift away from identity politics and corresponding single issue campaigns. Clearly, as feminists we must recognize that the campaigns around housing, education and welfare are now integral to the current women's movement. Do we then need a new language with which to call for solidarity and resistance to the cuts? Feminists are always being told they need to rebrand —does the left wing in Britain need the same? This is beyond irrelevant unless it is about increased accessibility and populism. What we urgently need is an end to the inertia of postmodern irony, and the courage to announce that we will

struggle for political transformation. This must be with solidarity, and in opposition to not only that which will affect us as individuals, but our brothers and sisters too.

THE FUCK HARDCORE SHOWS PROCLAMATION

It's one of those things where you avoid something you take issue with for a while, and then suddenly find yourself in the middle of it, and it catches you off guard, ill-prepared, and you start fuming.

I went to see Envy at Reggie's back in October (amazing, by the way!). One of the opening bands was Trash Talk. It was funny, because the first two bands were some instrumental band from Belfast and Touche Amore, and although kids were going nuts and singing along, it was no big deal. Then trash talk came out. Immediately, a huge pit formed in front of the stage, squishing almost everyone else back against the back wall. And then the familiar scene began.

Pacing back and forth, posturing aggressively, stomping, kicking, punching, violently flailing arms. Two dudes accidentally knocked into each other and started posturing at each other and shit talking, needing to be separated before a fight. Kids crisscrossed the room, performing one of the most extreme versions of macho masculinity ever to dilute the political bases of punk rock. Because this violence isn't even raw and reactionary; it's planned, staged, practiced. It privileges machismo unquestioningly. It privileges the antiquated notion that dudes can't control themselves and need to blow off steam violently because men will be men. It's such an obvious fucking farce.

When I watch this shit happen, I think to myself, of *course* I felt like a weird outsider a lot during a certain time of my growing up in punk… almost all of my friends were dudes and we always went to hardcore shows. I couldn't win, because there was barely any room for a different way to enjoy shows; you either had to perform the type of violent masculinity going on in the pit, or stand in the back and be accused of being a punk rock girlfriend who only holds coats and can't hang with the big boys (or find a way around that which is still privileged, like taking photos or tabling). And either way you're pitted in competition against other girls, because the dudes compare you to the other girls involved on a scale of who's conforming to hardcore dude standards the best, most worthy of being accepted into their group on their level, on their terms. The prevalent thread at hardcore shows is a dichotomy of macho fucking bullshit.

The thing is that I love a lot of hardcore music. I love listening to it, and I always have, especially amazing bands like Sick Fix, which subvert these standards as much as possible from within the genre. I just can't fucking stand how this stuff is often acted out at shows.

Pop punk dudes may often be sad misogynists and have their own set of issues deserving dissection, but at least I can go up to the front where I can actually see a band during a pop punk show and sing along and know I'm not going to get punched in the head by some beefy posturing asshole who probably has a Nike shoe collection and is an aloof jerk to the women he dates. That's why I got *into* punk, to get away from that mainstream dude mentality of entitlement and privilege and to be critical of that kind of performance. To be faced with it is a slap in the face, literally. And I'm not fucking interested.

I know that people who like going to hardcore shows will read this, and may disagree with me or be super offended. That's fine. You should think about why exactly that is though. You might think, Jen doesn't know what she's talking about; she just doesn't get it. Wrong, I do know. I've been going to hardcore shows for ten years and I've performed all of these roles at some point, and seen them performed. I'm interested in subversion and revolution, but not the kind that involves dick measuring contests. Radical counterculture politics like veganism and straight edge lose meaning when they are performed in such an oppressive environment without questioning it.

DO YOU HAVE A JOB FOR A GIRL LIKE ME?

Bands need to stop reuniting. Start a new band, a new idea is better than soiling the memory of what you had, of attempting a new reincarnation of something for an audience that demands entertainment in a variety where they know what to expect... or else. People find solace in repetition, in a ritual that they can feel part of where they know what is going to happen next, like watching a rerun of a favorite TV show. Is that what you want out of punk? An all expenses reunion show covers the plane tickets, half original members half original audience, let's get together for a group photo... Rock around the clock, authentic, established and guaranteed. Sponsored by a youth orientated corporation in exchange for all the personal details of all the attendees; there will be free beer for all.

I have a better idea, maybe write about it, in the style of Richard Meltzer/Lester Bangs/ Pushead another authentic rock scribe. Let the spittle hit the typewriter keys, recapture the day-s when there was something to be captured, the flaccid entity of rock music compressed into a bile filled sentence that will make all the readers deflate and expand at the same time. Elevate the most average bloke rock reenactment society into something that really meeeeans somethin' maaan. Or you could blog it. There's a coffee shop I go to sometimes and one of the guys that works there wears a Triumph motorcycle t-shirt that's exactly the same as the one Dylan wears on the cover of *Highway 61*. As if wearing this totem will somehow... do something, bring him closer to that thin high mercury sound. If you simulate something, the right clothes, the sound, the correct collection of references does it make it happen?

"The Godhead. Reminds me of Teddy and the Fratgirls or the Foams in the sense that one gets the notion that these must have been fun gals to hang out with or date. The timeless splendor of the arty urban misfit girl: Her goofy charm and no-holds-barred enthusiasm for all that she found weird, interesting or sexually appetizing. A toast to the art school weirdo outcast girls of the world: May they forever paint their room black or read Hermann Hesse to you in bed! The music is wild, out of control amateuristic slop goes from Electric Eels fuzzed out haterock to drumkits thrown down the stairs to minimal teen-angst and then back. Beautiful stuff. Got this in trade from Thurston Snore for some boring free jazz records back in the day. What a chump!" *Johan Kugelberg*

This is in reference to the Pervers / Deutscher Abschaum record, technically a split 7" though members of Pervers were also in Deutscher Abschaum. I read an interview with Beta, who was in both bands, where she talks about *MRR* giving them a great review. I couldn't figure out if she was talking about a tape if that 7", but alas, neither are in the collection for me to investigate at this point in time. This record is sinister, dark and otherworldly, really evocative and powerful, not just "crazy wild ladypunk!" All of which mean this is obviously a top want for me, not because I have sexual fantasies about wild crazy girls who play totally like, *free* music but because... I want to listen to those sounds and be transported out of a world in which the possibilities that women create in aural form are easily packaged up by a record kollector/kritic into "would DO her, she sounds WIIIILD!" It's just so rad and refreshing to always have your do-ability factioned into every thing you will ever write, record, create as a fresh wild female punker, and it really adds to the music too. To know that basement dwellin' record skunks would like, totally like to go back in time and bang the Foams. I got into music, into underground DIY punk and hardcore music specifically because of the possibilities that existed with limited resources. What people could do with one or two chords is more interesting than an avalanche of shredding guitar center solo bro-hymns. From Huggy Bear to Sheer Smegma, from Glueams to Neos, Noh Mercy to Flipper. Electric Eels! Void! X_X! What punks come up with on their own terms, with the limitations of cheapness/broke-ness, a lack of resources and access to the rock vocabulary creating it's own method of speaking. Different languages. When stupid shit, casual flippant misogyny, the endless jock mentality impedes on this invented world it's... frustrating.

There's this scene in *The Great Rock'n'roll Swindle*, where they have some sorta fake ad for Vicious Burgers, reiterating that this is a product, a financial scheme enabling you to buy into the punk rock wholesale. GG, Sid, Lemmy, Iggy, Stiv, just pick a sneer and run to the bank. No need to shift your focus or way of doing things, just buy in! Punk rock'n'fuckin' roll baby. Punky chips ahoy. You have been given your instructions, now follow

them! The legions of drones who think of punk as being this way, an outfit, an FU that meant something maybe in 1978 but now!? Is it a retread? I think of all the crazy girl bands that formed in the wake of punk rock, of post-punk and new wave, no wave and so forth, who found something that worked for them that they could mutate… and how no matter what they created the constraints of their gender is reflected back at them. "Punk is all about not giving a fuck bro, fuck the PC police!" Who gets the freedom to "not give a fuck!?" and how come not giving a fuck basically means not having to think about how your shitty aggro-dude behavior could possibly be alienating to punks who would love to "not give a fuck" but unfortunately due to the constraints of gender, sexuality and or race are not given that option. This train of thought brought to you by the trolls that populate the *MRR* facebook page. It's depressing how many men whose opinions are reflected in the mainstream also seem to need punk…

As I was working feverishly on this magazine I listened to a podcast put together by Mary of the awesome Neonates... You can listen to it here: http://web.me.com/gendertrouble/televisiondinner/TV_DINNER/TV_DINNER.html There are lots of shows to choose from, each one has many amazing secret histories put together by girls from various eras invested in punk, art, destruction, dance and soul... Not every song is a jam, but there are so many things to investigate, it's like a way more curated version of that female fronted lady punk box set some dude did a few years ago. Some of my faves so far: the band the Take who had a song called "Summer" on a compilation 7" that is somehow related to the Primitive Calculators, which was released in 1979. Angular Australian aggro art. "I Need a Jerk Like You" by Boston art damage Black Cat Bone, has a sleazy Patti Smith intoning over the Lounge Lizards appeal... "This is not what I want / This is just what I get" The singer was in Colorado goth punker group Your Funeral in the early '80s... The Anemic Boyfriends, girls discussing what guys are *really* into over this weird anodyne reggae/new wave beat... it's compulsive stuff. also check out: gunillamixtapes.net for more!
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I love hardcore, that is a fact. Most of my friends think of me as liking punk that is on the harder end of the spectrum, so when they find out I listen to Screeching Weasel, they are pretty surprised… Then again, I grew up in the Midwest at the same time pop punk was going strong in the Chicagoland area and beyond. I remember buying the *Boogadaboogadaboogada!* tape at a show and having as part of my skating soundtrack along with a host of other worn out punk tapes. I remember seeing Screeching Weasel at the Fireside Bowl when I was in High School. I am reminiscing and aging myself… Anyway, the point is Screeching Weasel, for better or worse, is a part of my teenage years and part of my punk education in my formative years. They will always have a place there… in the past. I think this goes for lots of people. Screeching Weasel meant something to them and for some it still does.

I also know about the reputation that Ben Weasel has always had for being kind of an asshole. Some people love him and some people hate him, but he is just some guy that probably didn't want to shoulder any responsibility of being a "role model" or "example," but guess what… once you achieve any notoriety, people have expectations of you. Furthermore, once you reunite your band and play high profile shows/fests for big bucks, people are going to notice what you say and do. Whether you think Ben Weasel is a dick or not, his punching someone in the face for throwing ice at him at one of these reunion shows is not excusable because he is an asshole or because he is really a nice guy, or because he is famous, or because he is punk, or because he is just some everyman. What he did was fucked up.

People have chimed in about the incident, often without even knowing what happened or seeing the videos that are circulating of the incident. Well, before you judge, check them out for yourself. There are two that I found pretty informative: one is about seven minutes long on YouTube: (www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOXuvbT0eUo). The title is "Cool Kids Club" and "Ben Weasel picks a fight with drunk girls." Try to ignore that… and there is also a 44 second video that shows a closer view of him punching a woman and when another woman who works (owns?) at the bar they are playing tries to break it up, he gets a few punches on her too (www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRmLoIsGq2A&NR=1). But pay attention to what Ben Weasel actually says AND pay attention to the crowd's reactions. They cheer when he says "I'll tell you what, I haven't whipped my dick out in about 20 years. But I'm on the verge of doing it just so just so the fucking skanky mess(?) can come up and suck on it. So she could delicately lick my taint," they cheer when he tells the woman who was throwing ice at him to get her "skanky whore ass" up on the stage so he can fuck her up and they cheer when he clocks that woman in the face. This might not have started as "sexist" per se, but Ben Weasel took it there and the crowd cheered on.

First, that guy is already in a position of power. He has the stage and the mic. He had a bunch of options (I feel a valid metaphor to the patriarchy coming on… can you?) It is most likely that this person, who happened to be a woman, was just being an annoying asshole by throwing ice at Ben Weasel. Yeah, shit gets thrown around at punk shows, but it still sucks. Especially when someone is spitting at you, yes, but you keep going and usually, if it's something extreme like a full beer, there will be repercussions, but ice vs. a full fist to the face hardly seems fair. That's not self-defense. That's not even retaliation, that's just violence. Was getting ice thrown at him annoying? I'm sure it was, but with all that cheering of your loving fans, was all that bravado necessary? The dude has been playing in punk bands for over what…30 fucking years? What the fuck was he thinking? I don't think he was thinking, but having those words "skanky whore" then punches flowing freely upon women does not mean he is "punk" or that he is a rapist either, but that he is definitely a sexist asshole.

I know what the reaction is going to be by my saying this, because I have been reading it for weeks now in response to *MRR* posting about the rest of Screeching Weasel quitting the band after the incident. Why is Ben Weasel sexist? Was this a sexist act? Well, kids, it *could* have resulted in not being sexist I guess, but who took it there? Dudes have been posting morning, noon and night one of my *favorite* sentiments… "Equal Rights, Equal Fights," (it has the same timbre as "Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve," doesn't it?). Really? To credit some of the men here, most opinions I have heard state that violence towards women is only acceptable if said woman is threatening your life. I have heard men also say that since there is a natural disparity in strength between men and women, violence toward women is an abuse of power. Whether you think these are vestiges of the patriarchy or if you agree with this, it's something to think about. Also, I think that people forget that violence against women as opposed to "violence" is often prompted by other motives. What about rape? What about domestic violence? I realize that violence between two partners is definitely not exclusive to the binary gender, hetero community. Unfortunately, partner abuse and rape is absolutely present in GLBTQ relationships and communities, but that is only proof that violence is often not "just" violence. There is something going on beyond the surface. In addition, often it does indeed take on a meaning beyond one person hitting another. In this case, I would argue that Ben Weasel calling women skanky whores and punching that woman in the face in a public place while on stage during a show as the crowd cheers on wasn't just him "fucking up," but also showing that not much has changed in way of attitudes toward women in the punk scene or in society in general. Men punching women does not mean women have achieved equality—this is not progress. Castration on the other hand… Kidding… but those attitudes, for instance "They wanted equality now they got it, shit," is like saying that equality is something women shouldn't have looked for. That's ridiculous and besides that… it's too late.

Depending on male chivalry is bullshit. I have been in more fights with men than I'd like to remember, one being a boyfriend. I have also been attacked by more than one man at a time. I don't talk about these incidents much, not because I am embarrassed, or ashamed at the damage done to me, but that I am tired of explaining myself. The most common question is "What happened? The second most common is "did you provoke them?" Mind you, this second question is not gender exclusive. It's not surprising that men blame women for being vic-

tims. Men created the social structure so why wouldn't they internalize it, why fuck it up, so why not? (Remember I am talking about Hetero mostly white men here…). That's not to say all men are to blame, but the way I see it is that if you are on top, why would you want to give that power up? Men blame women for the situation because why the fuck would men want to give up any part of their dominance? It's a polarized viewpoint in which someone wins and someone loses and if women win anything, many and most men in mainstream society see it as themselves losing something (their balls, money, control?). The idea of "Fairness" doesn't enter the equation.

In my younger years, that "did you provoke them" question came as a surprise and even hurt me, but now I have come to expect that no matter what the circumstances are, there is always some little part of people that want to blame the victim. It's not right, but I get it. It's a way of feeling ok about violence against people who are "weaker." As someone on the *Terrorizer* message board pointed out "That's the way oppression works isn't it, internalizing the rules and power structures that are around you (Foucault, Althusser, Gramsci)." We are also, victims to our own internalizing of all of this. We don't deserve to be hit because we are woman, Trans, Gay, etc… but often, that is why we are the contact point for a fist, a bat, a dick, because violence against people changes depending on the person. It's not just physical, it's mental, verbal, etc… Calling a man a bitch is not the same as calling a woman a bitch.

When women speak up about this kind of thing, they are quickly shut off. Most men I know either become intimidated or get "the glaze" where they pretend to listen but don't give a shit; maybe they are thinking about what kind of burrito they want to eat for dinner, etc… On the other spectrum, men often jump to the "Let me teach you about this "feminism" little lady..." posture when they are not even addressing the issue, they are just reciting some shit they read out of a book or heard in passing. I know there are quite a few exceptions these days, but this is often the case… So why don't women speak up? Why don't they defend themselves if they don't want men to defend them? You have to understand that the boys club is often stronger that the act of doing the right thing, meaning that when women speak up in their own defense, men often recede into the background, silencing themselves instead of supporting women for fear of being ostracized. Women are already on the outskirts of sorts within metal and punk. We don't want to be kicked out of the place we feel at home, because it's not like punk and metal women fit in with mainstream society. That's why there are communities of women and even trans, GLBTQ folks who have parallel scenes, but that sucks too. It's as if you have to have a separate scene or you have to play by the boy's rules. Fuck a bunch of that...

Remember, this conversation was started because Ben Weasel took a common situation at a show and turned it into some sexist bullshit. He took it to the "gender" realm. Now, when people rant about how PC is ruining punk and that they got sick of this shit in the '90s… you are the ones stuck in the nineties. Get with the fucking times. Why are you so scared of debate? Is it your pride? Here's your update people…Sexism isn't just about not being included or being left out due to discrimination, it's about being a target because of your sex or gender (including third gendered people). And beyond that, it's about having those things used against you.

Ben Weasel did issue an apology, "Whatever my feelings are about fans crossing the line like that, I wish I could have that moment back and deal with it in the same spirit as I did the preceding 60 minutes." Those 60 minutes in which he not only called women names but verbally threatened them? He also says "As a husband, father, and a musician on the public stage, I understand that it is my duty to always take responsibility for my actions in a socially acceptable way, and most especially in the face of confrontation." What? This is not an apology. Read between the lines… I guess in his book the only socially unacceptable part of his actions was actually punching that woman…everything else was OK. Getting caught is what he is apologizing for, nothing else.

I realize I haven't included many arguments here and I realize that I am coming at this from a Western, First World context, cis fem and all the other characteristics that may make my point of view limited or different to some degree, but I am more than open to opinions or critique. This is the only way we are gonna learn about this. Lay it on me…

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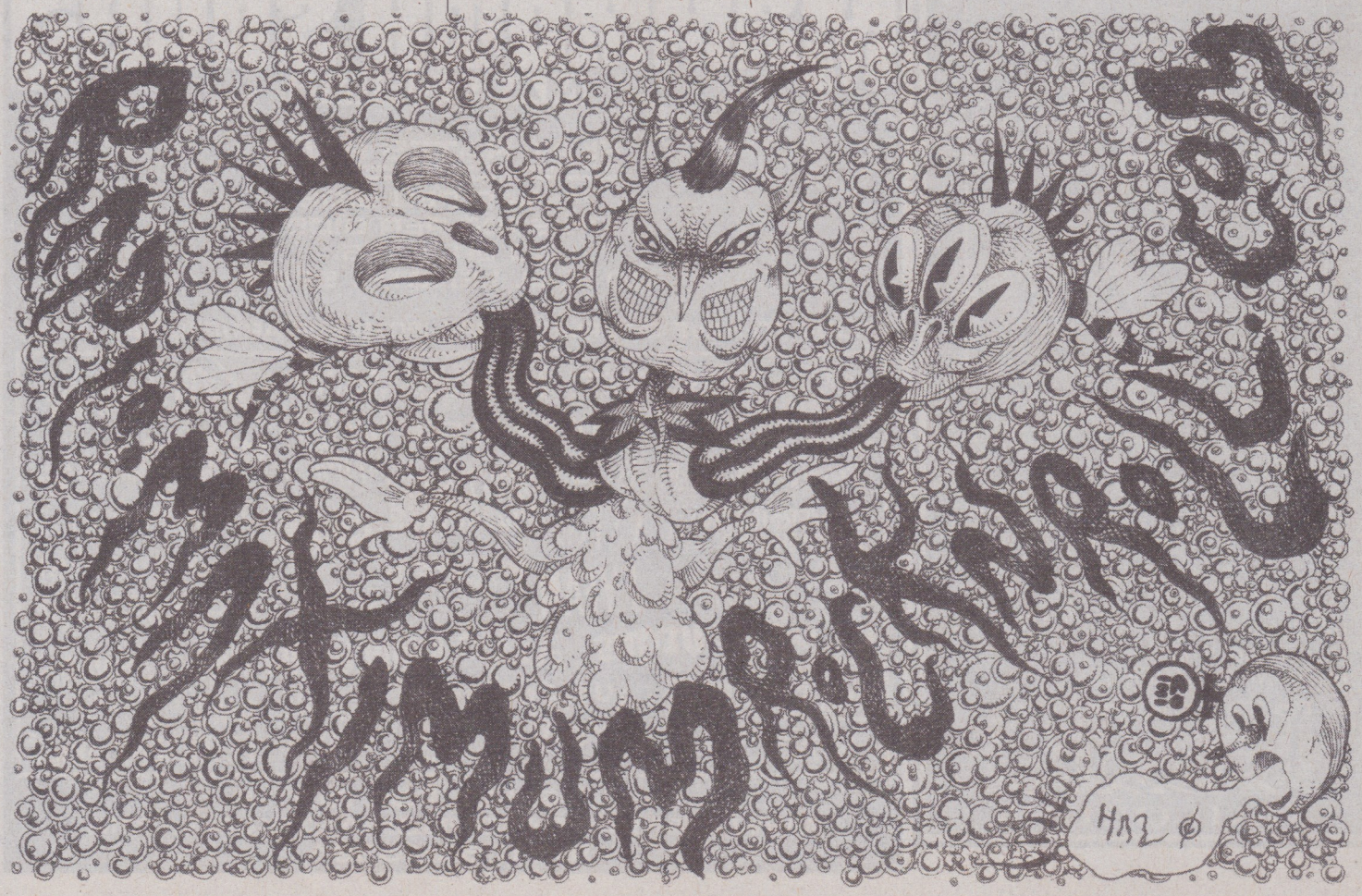

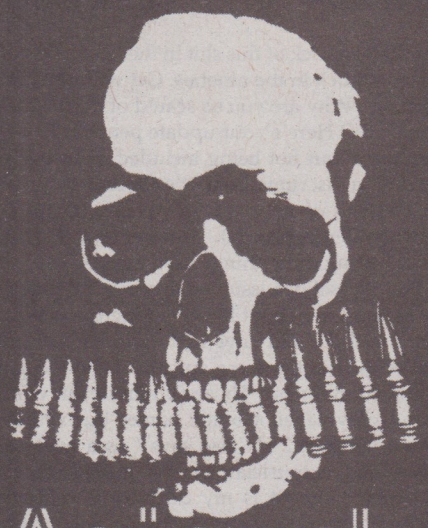

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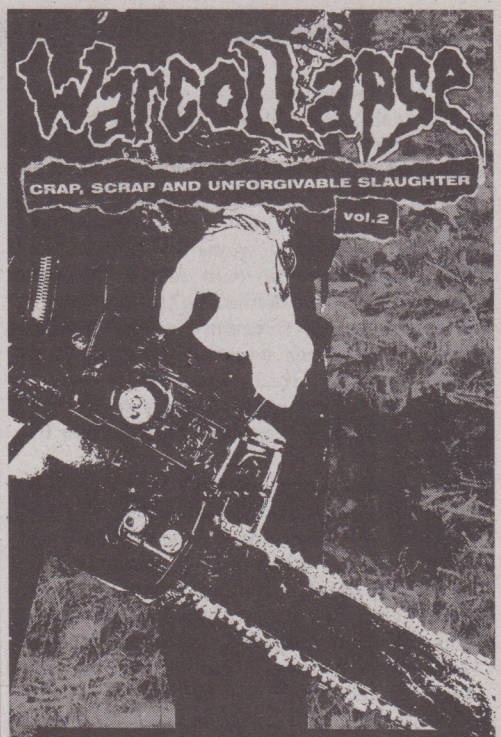
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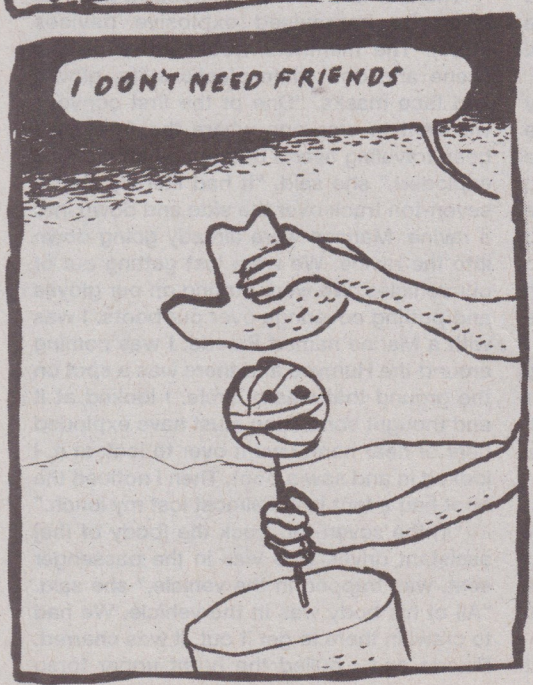
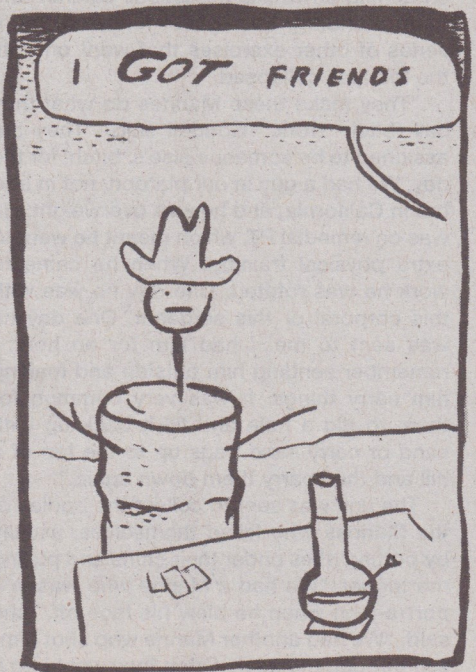
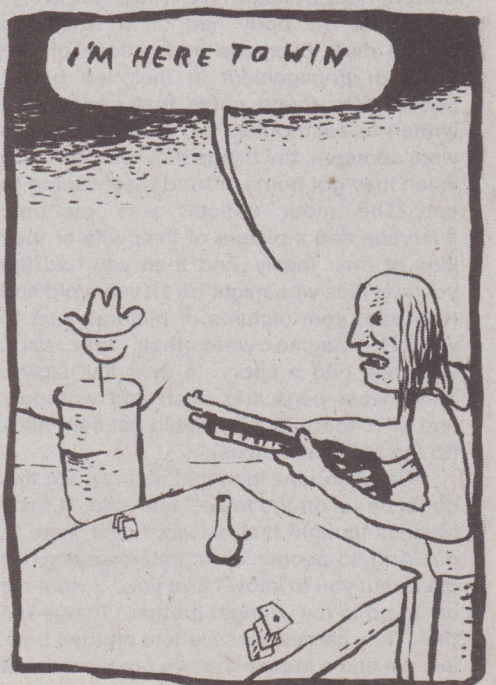






OWEN COOK 2011

NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY LAYLA

THE BODY BAGGERS OF IRAQ

by Chris Hedges from Truthdig

Jess Goodell enlisted in the Marines immediately after she graduated from high school in 2001. She volunteered three years later to serve in the Marine Corps' first officially declared Mortuary Affairs unit, at Camp Al Taqaddum in Iraq. Her job, for eight months, was to collect and catalog the bodies and personal effects of dead Marines. She put the remains of young Marines in body bags and placed the bags in metal boxes. Before being shipped to Dover Air Force Base, the boxes were stored, often for days, in a refrigerated unit known as a "reefer." The work she did was called "processing." An ambulance loaded with injured soldiers. The less fortunate troops, those who die, end up in the care of fellow servicemen and women who have to carry out gruesome work while struggling to hold on to their own sanity.

"We went through everything," she said when I reached her by phone in Buffalo, N.Y., where she is about to become a student in a Ph.D. program in counseling at the University of Buffalo. "We would get everything that the body had on it when the Marine died. Everyone had a copy of *The Rules of Engagement* in their left breast pocket. You found notes that people had written to each other. You found lists. Lists were common, the things they wanted to do when they got home or food they wanted to eat. The most difficult was pictures. Everyone had a picture of their wife or their kids or their family. And then you had the younger kids who might be 18 years old and they had prom pictures or pictures next to what I imagine were their first cars. Everyone had a spoon in their flak jacket. There were pens and trash and wrappers and MRE food. All of it would get sent back [to the Marines' homes]."

"We all had the idea that at any point this could be us on the table," she said. "I think Marines thought that we went over there to die. And so people wrote letters saying 'If I die I want you to know I love you.' 'I want my car to go to my younger brother.' Things like that. They carried those letters on their bodies. We had a Marine that we processed and going through his wallet he had a picture of a sonogram of a fetus his wife had sent him. And a lot of Marines had tattooed their vital information under an arm pit. It was called a meat tag."

The unit processed about half a dozen suicides. The suicide notes, she said, almost always cited hazing. Women, she said, were constantly harassed, especially sexually, but it often did not match the systematic punishment and humiliation meted out to men who were deemed to be inadequate Marines. She said that Marines who were overweight or unable to do the physical training were subjected to withering verbal and physical abuse. They were called "fat nasties" and "shit bags." The harassed Marines would be assigned to other individual Marines and become their slaves. They would be sent on punishing runs in which many of them vomited. They would be forced to bear-crawl—walk on all fours—the length of a football fie-ld and back. This would be followed by sets of monkey fuckers—bending down, grabbing the ankles, crouching down like a baseball catcher and then standing up again—followed by a series of other exercises that went on until the Marines collapsed.

"They make these Marines do what they call 'bitch' work," Goodell said. "They are assigned to be someone else's 'bitch' for the day. We had a guy in our platoon, not in Iraq but in California, and he was overweight. He was on remedial PT, which meant he went to extra physical training. When he came to work he was rotated. One day he was with this corporal or this sergeant. One day he was sent to me. I had him for an hour. I remember sending him outside and making him carry things. It was very common for them to dig a hole and fill it back up with sand or carry sand bags up to the top of a hill and then carry them down again."

The unit was sent to collect the bodies of the Marines who killed themselves, usually by putting rifles under their chins and pulling the trigger. "We had a Marine who was in a port-a-john when he blew his face off," she said. "We had another Marine who shot himself through the neck. Often they would do it in the corner of a bunker or an abandoned building. We had a couple that did it in port-a-johns. We had to go in and peel and pull off chunks of flesh and brain tissue that had sprayed the walls. Those were the most frustrating bodies to get. On those bodies we were also on cleanup crew. It was gross. We sent the suicide notes home with the bodies."

"We had the paperwork to do fingerprinting, but we started getting bodies in which there weren't any hands or we would get bodies that were just meat," said Goodell, who in May will publish a memoir called *Shade It Black: Death and After in Iraq*. The book title refers to the form that required those in the mortuary unit to shade in black the body parts that were missing from a corpse. "Very quickly it became irrelevant to have a fingerprinting page to fill out. By the time we would get a body it might have been a while and rigor mortis had already set in. Their hands were usually clenched as if they were still holding their rifle. We could not unbend the fingers easily."

The unit was also sent to collect Marines killed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The members would arrive on the scene and don white plastic suits, gloves and face masks. "One of the first convoys we went to was one where the Army had been traveling over a bridge and an IED had exploded," she said. "It had literally shot a seven-ton truck over the side and down into a ravine. Marines were already going down into the ravine. We were just getting out of our vehicles. We were putting on our gloves and putting coverings over our boots. I was with a Marine named Pineda. I was coming around the Humvee and there was a spot on the ground that was a circle. I looked at it and thought something must have exploded here or near here. I went over to look at it. I looked in and saw a boot. Then I noticed the boot had a foot in it. I almost lost my lunch."

"In the seven-ton truck the [body of the] assistant driver, who was in the passenger seat, was trapped in the vehicle," she said. "All of his body was in the vehicle. We had to crawl in there to get it out. It was charred. Pineda and I pulled the burnt upper torso

from the truck. Then we removed a leg. Some of the remains had to be scooped up by putting out hands together as though we were cupping water. That was very common. A lot of the deaths were from IEDs or explosions. You might have an upper torso but you need to scoop the rest of the remains into a body bag. It was very common to have body bags that when you picked them up they would sink in the middle because they were filled with flesh. The contents did not resemble a human body."

The members of the mortuary unit were shunned by the other Marines. The stench of dead flesh clung to their uniforms, hair, skin and fingers. Two members of the mortuary unit began to disintegrate psychologically. One began to take a box of Nyquil tablets every day and drink large quantities of cold medicine. He was eventually medevaced out of Iraq. "Our cammies would be stained with blood or with brains," she said. "When you scoop up the meat it often would get on the cuffs of our shirts. You could smell it, even after you took off your gloves. We weren't washing our cammies everyday. Your cuff comes to your face when you eat. Physically we were stained with remains. We had a constant smell like rotten meat, which I guess is what it was since often the bodies had been in the sun and the heat for a long time. The flesh had gone bad. The skin on a body in the hot sun slides off. The skin detaches itself from the layer beneath and slides around on itself."

"Our platoon was to the Marines what the Marines are to much of America: We did things that had to be done but that no one wanted to know about," she said. "The other Marines knew what we did, but they did not want to think it could happen to them. I had one female Marine in my tent who would talk to me. The rest would not give me the time of day. The Marines in Mortuary Affairs knew that any day could be our day. Other Marines, who have to go out on the convoys, who have to get up the next day, have to get on with life."

Her unit once had to recover two Marines who had drowned in a lake. It appeared one had leapt in to save the other. The bodies, which were recovered after a couple of days by Navy divers, were grotesquely swollen. One of the Marines was so bloated and misshapen that the body was difficult to carry on a litter. "His neck was as wide as his bloated head, and his stomach jutted out like a barrel," she writes in the book. "His testicles were the size of cantaloupes. His face was white and puffy and thick. Not fat, but thick. It was unreal. He looked like a movie prop, with thick, gray, waxy skin and the thick purple lips. We couldn't stop looking at these bodies because they were so out of proportion and so disfigured and because, still, they looked like us."

It was hardest to look into the faces of the dead. She and the other members of the mortuary unit swiftly covered the faces when they worked on the bodies. They avoided looking at the eyes of the corpses. Once, the unit had to process seven Marines killed in an explosion. Seven or eight body bags were delivered to the bunker. "We had clean body bags set up so we could sort the flesh," she said. "Sometimes things come in with nametags. Or sometimes one is Hispanic and you could tell who was Hispanic and who was the white guy. We tried separating flesh. It was ridiculous. We would open a body bag and there was nothing but vaporized flesh. There were not four hands or a whole leg in a bag. We tried to distribute the mush evenly throughout the bags. We were trying to do the best we could sorting it out. We had the last body bag come in. We opened up the body bag and it was filled with the heads. I looked at four before looking away. Not only did we have to look at them, we had to pick them up and figure out who it belonged to. The eyes were looking back at us. We got used to a lot of it. But the heads worked the other way. They affected us more strongly as time passed. We saw on the heads the expressions of fright and horror. It made us wonder what we were doing here."

She processed one Marine whose face was twisted at the moment of death by rage. The face of this Marine began to haunt her. "I had this feeling that something awful had occurred," she said. "The way he had come in and stiffened he had this look to his face that made my stomach curl. It looked angry. Often expressions on bodies would look fearful and hurt. The faces looked as though they had received death. But this face looked like he had given death." She and the other members of the unit became convinced they could feel and hear the souls of the dead Marines they had processed and housed in their reefers.

And then there was a body that was brought in one day that was not stiff. "He was fully dressed in his cammies and his whole body was intact," she said. "His hands were lying folded across his stomach." She and the others noticed that the Marine on the table was breathing lightly. The chest was going up and down. They frantically called their superiors to find out what to do. They were told to wait.

"Just wait? Wait for what?" she cried.

She remembers the doc saying: "There's nothing we can do. Just wait."

"People don't wait for this sort of thing," she protested. "What are we waiting for? What if this Marine was your brother, would we wait?"

They stood and watched as the man died. Goodell stormed out of the bunker.

"There was always a heaviness in the air," she said. "It felt like I was being watched. We would feel hands on our shoulders or hands on our heads. Everyone had stories of sounds they heard or things they had felt. I was on watch at the bunker and I heard the back door open. I assumed it was one of the Marines coming in to use the Internet or the phone. I waited for them to come up. They would always come up. But no one came up. I got up and didn't see anyone. I went back to my duty hut and I heard footsteps walk across the bunker. This kind of thing happened often."

Her return to the United States was difficult, filled with retreats into isolation, substance abuse, deep depression and dysfunctional relationships. Slowly she pulled her life back together, finishing college and applying to graduate school so she can counsel trauma victims. "Every single Marine I know goes to Iraq to help," she said. "While I was there that is what I thought. That is why I volunteered. I thought I was going to help the Iraqis. I know better now. We did the dirty work. We were used by the government. The military knows that young, single men are dangerous. We breed it in Marines. We push the testosterone. We don't want them to be educated. They are deprived of a lot and rewarded with very little. It keeps us at ground level. We cannot question anyone. We do what we are told."

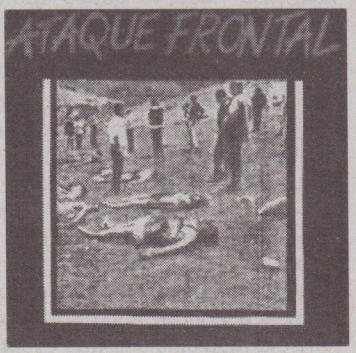
"I am still in contact with most of the people I knew," she said. "They are not coping. One lives in VA [Veterans Affairs] constantly seeing psychologists and psychiatrists. One was kicked out of the Marines for three DUIs. Another was kicked out of the Marines because he took cocaine. Those who have gotten out are living below the poverty level. And what people do to cope is re-enlist. When they re-enlist they do better. They function. I am the only one who went to school of the 18 Marines in Mortuary Affairs. But I am in counseling at the VA. I have been diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety, depression and substance abuse. What separates me from them is that I have a great support system and I found my salvation in my education."

"War is disgusting and horrific," she said. "It never leaves the people who were involved in it. The damage is far greater than the lists of casualties or cost in dollars. It permeates lifestyles. It infects cultures and people and worldviews. The war is never over for us. The fighting stops. The troops get called back. But the war goes on for those damaged by war."

Not long ago she received a text message from a Marine she had worked with in Mortuary Affairs after he tried to commit suicide.

"I've got $2,000 in the bank," the message read. "Let's meet in NYC and go out with a bang."

R.I.P. JOSE EDUARDO MATUTE



By Rodrigo Rodriguez Ro

Kon estas lineas, deseamos rendir un homenaje a Jose Eduardo Matute. Matute para los amigos,que nos dejo el pasado viernes 18 de Marzo ,el era guitarrista de la Banda Guerrilla Urbana que jvnto a Leuzemia, Zcuela Crrada. y Autopsia fueron las pioneras de la Movida Subterranea en Lima, Peru. Despues cambiaria el nombre de la banda a Ataque frontal quienes bajo el sello New Wave de Francia editarian el EP del mismo nombre de la banda que los convertiria en una banda emblematica en el mundo debido a sv fiereza y contvndencia de su misica y letras, seguira en el recuerdo por su legado de su musica. Que En Paz Descanses Matute...

Tengo ahora pocas penas...estoy seguro de lo que hago...y hago lo que tengo que hacer... (Memorias)

With these few lines, we pay tribute to Jose Eduardo Matute. Our friend Matute passed away Friday, March 18th. He was the guitarist of the band Guerrilla Urbana that along with Leuzemia, Zcuela Crrada, Autopsia, Narcosis and others were the pioneers of the la Movida Subterranea, the Underground Movement, which took place during the mass bloodshed and extreme turbulence in the early '80s in Lima, Peru. The name of the band later changed to Ataque Frontal who released an anarchist zine and a self-titled EP of their 1986 demo recording on the French label New Wave in 1987. This release captured the ferocity and power of this emblematic band, securing its legacy with its music and lyrics. Matutes contribution to the history and shape of punk will not be forgotten. Thank you, Matute. That you rest in peace, Matute...

Tengo ahora pocas penas...estoy seguro de lo que hago...y hago lo que tengo que hacer... (Memorias)

Matute also contributed a Peru scene report which appeared in July 1985, Issue #26, which can be viewed here:
www.operationphoenixrecords.com/mrrissue26.html

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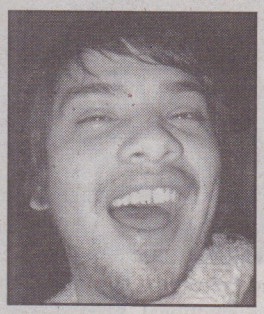
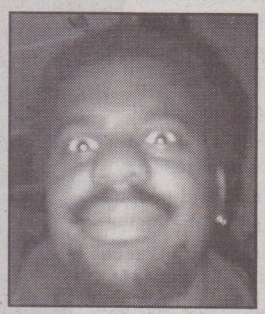
MRR asks YOU:

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

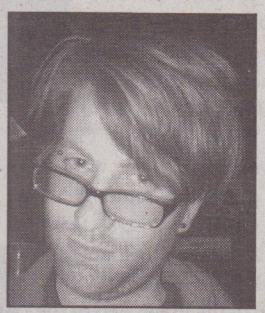
This month's question: What do you think of Steve Ignorant's "performing Crass"? (asked at a Hazmat show with Acephalix, Murderess, Opt Out, and Badr Vogu)



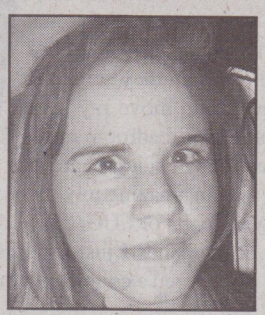
Tony, 23, Oakland
I'm fine with paying $30 to see Steve Ignorant play their songs, because I've paid well over $30 for their records. I have a job, so I can pay to see them.



Al, 26, Oakland
I think Crass is one of the worst punk bands ever.



Will, 24, Oakland
I'm not dignifying that with a response.

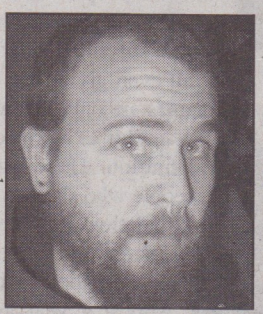


Emilou, 22, Oakland
Sequels are never as good as the original.

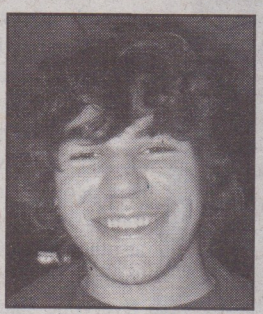
Dylan, 18, Oakland
I don't know, I'm too drunk right now. But whoa, I'm gonna be in Maximum Rocknroll? When can I see myself in it? Can I talk about my band right now?

Trisstessa, 33, Oakland
Mostly, I think it's a moneymaking scheme, but it's probably my only opportunity to see someone who originally sang for Crass sing Crass songs, so I'm most likely gonna go to the show. It'll probably be me acting like I'm sixteen and full of energy again.

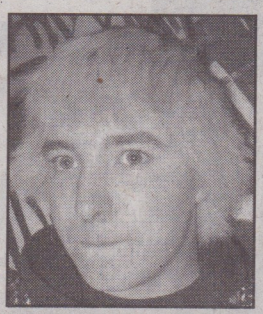
Max, 23, Oakland
I think Crass is one of the best punk bands ever, but Steve Ignorant is a fucking dick, and should leave it alone.



Ian, 28, Oakland
I don't know that much about what he's doing, but I'm assuming he's just trying to ride the wave of popularity of bands trying to cash in on the reunion trend. I can only imagine it's going to be equally as embarrassing as when Danbert Nobacon of Chumbawumba did his solo stuff.



Andrew, 18, Orinda
They're all too old, and they're hippies, and they don't eat meat.



Henry, 17, Alameda
I think it's good that he's still making money.

Hungarian Defekt Scene Report

by Viktor Sofa King

Out in the dark. While the snow is obstinately falling on my town. Feeling all right. There is a mix of sludgy melting snowflakes and a smile on my face. I feel great because memories from last night are coming back. I was at a house party, but for a couple months, every house party has meant a bit more than smoking in the kitchen and getting dizzy from cheap beer while nodding to ironic or nostalgic, stupid songs. I was out in the dark last year and did the exact same circle around my neighborhood as I did tonight. Maybe I had a similar ink stamp on my wrist from the show last night, or maybe still from a few nights before. The only thing that has changed is that now I have house parties to go to and have fun with people there. When the routine bites hard you can tell that you probably have an OK scene. When you're in love with a specific trend it must be an explosion within the scene. And even giving it a name means something more, because names are only given to big things. When I thought about all these kids as a crowd, I came up with "Defekt Scene" as the definition. There was one specific show where most of the people who showed up looked like the remainder of the male population after a war fought in the recent past, who were weak enough to be left behind the safe lines because they are not even good as first-row bullet catchers.

Almost a year ago I attended a house party in the deep countryside in a barn. I went there to have fun, not to witness some kind of magic. I never hated the kids; I always was pissed off by the old people who made up stupid rules or routines to scare away little kids from doing anything out of their hearts, not because of a stupid fake ethical code. Although I never was too social with people, I had nothing to do with this. I liked people from a distance. But at that party I felt the youth, connecting, rebellion, and fun. It was a party full of people who at other parties would be in the corner, completely invisible. Poor wallflowers. Here everyone mattered and it was amazing. Everyone shared their beers, jokes, equipment, and contacts for foreign show promoters. Everyone was nice and the bands were kinda great too. Leaving with a huge positive emotional charge, I watched all these kids at the shows and they attended all of them, either as a devoted fan of the punk scene itself or as a band member ripping up the stage. After this revelation I had to realize that this year is the center of something really great. Bands formed with the desire to play great music. They tour, host other bands, do interesting home recording sessions. They are active politically and socially. The scene thinks, and people have opinions that they stick into their acts. Finally, they have fucking great acts. Every show is a big hang out, with the teen angst in the focus. And the house after-parties are clearly the icing on the cake. These kids created their own scene and they don't give a fuck about assholes who try to mock them or laugh at them. They don't need anyone but themselves. Society doesn't provide them weekend entertainment, so they just rot in their rehearsal rooms writing songs in these gifted empty nights.

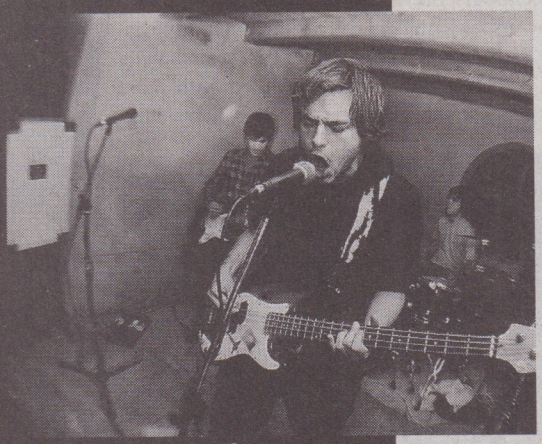
The quintessence of this scene may be LÖMBIHEAD. On terrible hangover-soaked days I usually wonder, if there were about 60 people at the show, why the hell can I only remember 20 specific familiar faces? I first saw LÖMBIHEAD at that magical barn fest I mentioned above and I haven't recognized these kids since they hit the metaphorical stage. After that they disappeared, only to come into view again in the lower end of the night when one of them asked if anyone wanted to smoke some pot with them. They blended in; they hid in corners or behind bigger room plants. A couple hours earlier, when they started to play I couldn't do anything but surrender and move my head, my body, and my whole devotion of punk kids' bedroom music. They played sloppy but in the good way. They couldn't care less about anything else but to have fun. It was an amazing mix of the geeky craziness of RAMONES, the witty parts of FUGAZI, and some visceral URINALS. The latter of the bands I just listed is the coolest association, because, as I discovered a couple months

This post-apocalyptic, nuclear beach party music is one of the finest things that has ever come out of this shithole.

later, the band did not know the URINALS at all. This post-apocalyptic, nuclear beach party music is one of the finest things that has ever come out of this shithole. The lyrics are as smart as they are obscene and harsh. Their sweet and awkward aura captures me every time. There's no show happening on the stage, it's just pure teenage noise music that you must listen to and see if you have the ability to recognize it. One particular dance has evolved around these kids where the crowd goes half naked. Looking at this scenario and their bodies gives an idea about the name "defect." Beers in their hands and half naked, young kids hug each other. It's a magical scene you wouldn't wanna miss. The formally most unimportant kids in society doing the most important thing on earth: saving their own lives—from boredom, from growing up, from spending a Friday night alone, from pining over rejections.

As it usually goes around in Hungary, there's no clear reason why this bunch of bands came to existence right at this specific time. No band sounds like the other and all the kids became friends after they started playing shows together or just found each other by the common coincidence of making something really cool. There were good bands before them, a few, but there's no specific sound bequeathed to this new generation. Maybe hints of some attitude but, come on, real punks have their unwritten code of honor since forever. DIY or die. We go everywhere because we wanna play. One band has been around for years, starting out in the "non-defect" times, still running and giving us better stuff from show to show. The name is DANCE OR DIE. Finally they have gained their well-deserved due—at least here—and they rip. They operate on this late-'90s, early-'00s where-do-we-go-from-here gloomy, melodic sound mixed with a we-don't-wanna-grow-up desperation. It's teenage angst without an expiration date on it. Some classify them as fast core or crust mixed with some emo, but it's just fast and passionate hardcore punk with three guys screaming and four guys seemingly playing their hearts out on their instruments. The usual criticism of seeing them live is they look sad. Well, the whole continent is sealed with a romanticized sadness, which just gets filled with more realism if we go East. Maybe their loveless-ness shines

Fuseism



Limbihead

Planbeer

Young Arsenal

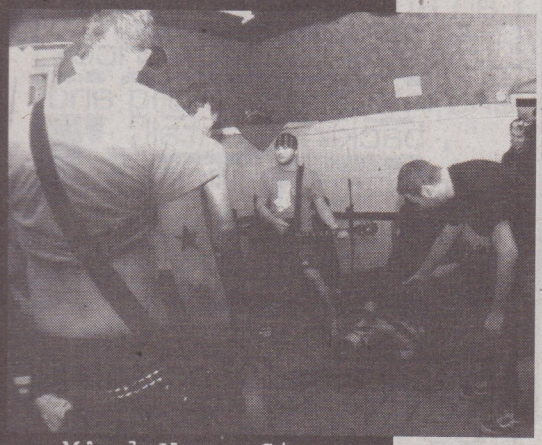
through as much from their looks as from their songs, but since when do we wanna turn our heads away if we see something being so real at a punk show? If you wanna have fun then learn their lyrics and sing with them. It's not that easy to observe other people's emotional outtakes when you're singing along and shaking. A couple of weeks ago I saw them with the poorest sound a shady club could offer. Their raging, emotionally exhausting noise got turned down and they sounded like a passionate tuneful punk band that does not just write songs that will do the thing, but they perform them with a lot of will.

Wandering off from the outskirts and going towards the center of the city that looks like Prague but dirtier (Budapest) we find the residence of FOR MY FRIENDS, a bunch of wild kids, drugged and messed up. They started out from the ashes of NOTHING, a band that wanted to finally play good music and even though they played terribly live… at least it wasn't shitty music performed even shittier. Falling out from the classical straight up angry-kid hardcore, FOR MY FRIENDS instead goes with the beer-flavored bearded pop or melodic punk mixed with a little more anger and geekiness. Although, I doubt these guys had enough time to secrete as many hormones as needed to grow a decent beard. Moreover, they lacked the will for many long months to play their songs properly. I saw them once and it was like SEX PISTOLS with four Sid Vicious' on heroin. The ideas behind their music were always cool, but the whole picture looked more like a good draft than an actual act. As it usually goes, time could fix what diligence could have done quicker. The drummer still could enter a "who could beat an egg longer, with full force but without breaking the shell" contest but at least now the music sounds more tight. The casual critic, standing right next to me at a recent gig told me, "We'd rather hear their influences than the song itself." Even though he was damn right, FOR MY FRIENDS plays a type of music that can capture you, make you bang your head, and put a smile on your face. Taking away my personal bias of living in the same city, I have no idea how good they can be, but the good thing for me is I don't have to care about that. If you don't like them, then move here and get used to the mistakes. Trust me, it's great to see kids swinging in with a beer, some weed, and broken hearts, trying to be Budapest's best dancers. Of course they are far from it, but at least they are trying.

Hailing from Salgótarján, here we have Gábor Rádi, former vocalist of SÄW, a guy with two bands and a label called Kids Like Us, and he still lives in an incubator. One of his music projects is called YOUNG ARSENAL. Inspired by, and sometimes aping, the so-called Kirsch sound, they play open-chord, raw, noisy but melodic-in-the-emo-way hardcore punk with social/political lyrics. They also use a lot of sound collages both at live shows and on record. Well, you'd rather listen to them on record if you want to hear the real thing because at live shows they play with stockings on their heads (women's nylon, not the bank robber type) obstructing their view, so they don't see the microphones they are supposed to sing in and the mp3 player with which the aforementioned interlude skits are played from. Even though sometimes they test your nerves and make one query their whole existence, I must be fair because most of the time they do a solid job with delivering fine punk rock. On the other hand, Gábor's other band called FUSEISM is something I haven't heard before. Their guitarist comes from this island within Budapest called Csepel, which is like another universe. Its residents are chained to the shores, turning into agoraphobics on that tiny land, especially when we mix punks with the cheapest local beer, enough glue, and one of the biggest industrial areas of the country. There are many abandoned buildings; fine spaces for rehearsal rooms, raves, or simply vanishing from society. This guy cut his bonds. He didn't burn any bridges, but he delivers the best guitar parts I can even remember. I read that Revolution Summer—or maybe just Guy Picciotto's guitar parts in RITES OF SPRING—was hugely influenced by the guitar playing of RIKK AGNEW. That is what FUSEISM reeks of too. Dreamy, Revolution Summer guitar rage pushed through the echoes of the surf sound and a little bit of the guitar overdose given nowadays by FUCKED UP. It is delivered with a cold-handed rhythm section and consciously weak vocals, like the singer doesn't even try to sound enjoyable or simply doesn't care at all. FUSEISM dwells on ground that could capture the attention of lame hipsters as well, but they have the attitude and credo that can convince punks that all the fancy assholes at the shows are there by mistake. This band is the real deal.

Going west into Veszprém County we get the hotbed of new punk in Hungary. The two epitomes of the scene are PFA and PLAN BEER, a group of friends and tour mates. PFA was formed by four ultimately nasty kids. The news is that now they are backed up by a keyboard player, but no one has been lucky enough to see this new formation so far as I'm writing these lines. These fucked up little prodigies are killing it every time, everywhere. They play thrash-y punk hardcore with sweaty, mutilated one-finger solos. The pace changes like the rollercoaster mood of a drunk person,

For My Friends



Mind Your Step

PFA

Limbihead

balancing on the edge of passing out and endless raving. Their short, to-the-point lyrics are like drunken revelations and epiphanies of modern society and of punk itself, murmured at the lower ends of house parties on a couch with vomit stains. Every word has this awakening stink of belching. They need to be digested a bit, but all in all they are thoughtful, funny, ironic and, most of all, true. Like a book consisting of nothing but perfect one-liners one after another. PFA would be excellent music to drop acid to and watch weird movies played backwards, or just wonder about these kinda things. It's not the sound of terror. It's the sound of taking weird drugs that make you more punk, not a smiling puppy who accepts everything that the world offers.

PLAN BEER, on the other hand, walks along the classical path of punk, playing nothing but fast and smart music filled with the anger of youth. They use more melodies, with sing-a-long parts and mid-tempos. The whole sound has a darkish, atmospheric tone to it, and totally resonates with the desperation that makes punk music awesome. They sound like what punk should have sounded after the glorious days of the '80s, and not like the punk that had been fucked up in the medieval decade of the '90s—speaking of course within the map lines of Hungary. There is nothing progressive in their sound, nor is there any hallmark of any bullshit retro feeling, but the timelessness of their songs are truly about the present. Luckily we live and listen to everything in the present, so it can stick with us until we become the past. They play their guitars and shout their lyrics in a way that offers something to think about and most of the times they nail it with the slight chance of fucking it up, which makes their music more interesting. This last sentence is quite true for all of the previous band descriptions included in this report. If you're looking for punk rock in its raw beauty, without any added polish or adjectives, here you are.

The last band that comes to my mind when thinking of something awesomely wrong is MIND YOUR STEP. Hailing from the area of Győr, they play furious punk hardcore that reminds me of early AGNOSTIC FRONT, SSD, or slower fastcore bands on Youth Attack. Well, their point is to play fast and noisy. The first time I heard them I didn't see them 'cause I was handling the door for the show. They did a MINOR THREAT song that sounded sloppy through the door that was between the stage and me. My friend came to me and told me that they should instead cover VOID, because even if they fuck it up it is still VOID, or rather it is even more VOID. This is kind of what you get from them. A chase for staying in time that sometimes leads into chaotic noise, but it still is good and entertaining even when it falls apart, like a tightrope walker who falls, only with punk if you fall you don't get hurt. That is the best show everyone wants to see. And it's not even sympathy towards them. They are great in the punk way and the punk way is the best way.

So this is the "Defekt Scene." Mostly. I'm sure anywhere there is punk there are also kids who are exactly the same. And if you don't see magic in them, I'm sorry but you should go with radio rock. Young and snotty kids stick together, throwing guerilla house parties or rehearsal room shows, forming new bands, writing fanzines. All in all, they make their shit happen. Of course there are more Hungarian bands. What you've read about is just a tiny piece of it. Some groups are even better suited for my taste than any of these bands above, but this scene captures something significant that is happening here now, in a scene that's usually always looks down on newcomers and weirdos, with a government fucking up everyone's lives. Now punk music and punks in barns and bedrooms seem to have restored what it's about—a cool, nasty, weird, nerdy but honest secret...and a big one.

PS: For online punks, there's a blog where you can hear most of the bands' materials: heart-a-tact.blogspot.com

Now punk music and punks in barns and bedrooms seem to have restored what it's about ...a cool, nasty, weird, nerdy but honest secret

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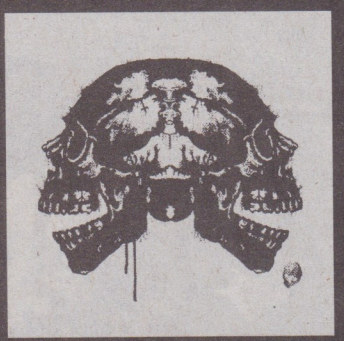

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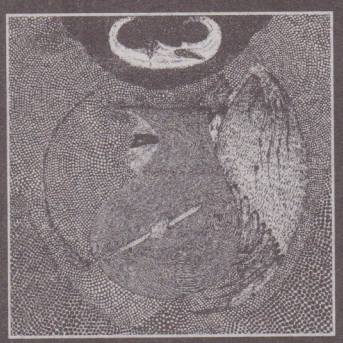

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KRIEGSHÖG

MRR *has been trying to pin down Kriegshög, one of the most important Japanese hardcore bands of the recent years, for the better part of the last two years. When we say a band is important we're talking about bands on the level of Bastard or Framtid, bands that leave us shocked for years and then we try to copy the style for decades (failing utterly). Of course there are plenty of Japanese hardcore bands that also blow everything you think you know about hardcore punk based on Western bands, but when it comes to playing sharp, decisive, powerful, and devastating hardcore punk unlike the world has ever seen Kriegshög is really the shit. Ironically, then, that Kriegshög is arguably the most frequently misspelled Japanese hardcore band in* MRR*...ever! Sadly, by the time we got the band to agree to do this interview they had just split up, and the fact that this news came just weeks after they released their modern hardcore manifesto and masterpiece self-titled LP is particularly heartbreaking! Imagine if they would have gone on. But it was not to be! For newcomers, Japanese hardcore label HG Fact has just released a complete discography CD, including demos and the 7"s as well as the LP. If you have not yet caught on the new wave of brutality and hardcore massacre, please note that you need this CD. Stateside punks and skins are also encouraged to book tickets to Chaos in Tejas this summer for a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see Kriegshög play a one-off final farwell US gig.*

Questions by Paco Mus and Tony Gunnarsson. Photos Martin Sorrondeguy.

MRR: First, let me say thank you very much for doing this interview! For people outside of Japan it is very interesting to read interviews with Japanese hardcore bands because they will most likely not get the chance to see the band play live (unless they travel to Japan). Therefore interviews like this help people on the other side of the world to understand a little more about Kriegshög, a band many people are already familiar with because of records only.
Masaki: Thank you too! and I am really sorry for being so late.

MRR: Ok, so I know a little bit of the history of Kriegshög from the interview you did with my friend Tom in his fanzine *Evil Minded* #4. But I am not sure everyone that reads *Maximumrocknroll* will have read that interview: Would you tell the history of Kriegshög? When did you start? Why did you start? What was the inspiration?
Masaki: I met Shingo at a Cut Throat (Portland) show in Yokohama in 2005. We both liked Portland bands, and we were both willing to start a band, so we decided to start one that night. Just the two of us started practicing and after a while Tera joined on guitar. He had been friends with Shingo since they were three or so, and knew each other really well. Then Nenji joined. Nenji and I played in a band a year before that, but his drumming really sucked back then. After a year, maybe from playing in Unarm, his drumming changed so powerful and raw. The first time we made noise together, we figured out what to aim for, it was so fun. Our first show was also in 2005. Inspirations? Japanese punk, Portland punk, Swedish punk, and metal? I don't know, that was the shit we liked back then, but we never intended to sound like something else. We just wanted to do something simple and aggressive.

MRR: Also, would you say something about the different band members? What do they do apart from playing in Kriegshög?
Masaki: Nenji plays in Unarm. That's it. No one else plays in other bands.

MRR: Tell us about the records and tapes that you made before the new LP. Are you happy with how the tapes and the 7"s came out?
Masaki: The first release was the demo. Like all the other records, we put a lot of energy and time into it. We recorded at Noise Room where we recorded all the other stuff, hand dubbed the tapes. It took hours to make 200 copies! Then the *Hardcore Hell* 7" EP in 2008, which was originally released by Hardcore Survives. It came with a special tape with cover songs of Iconoclast and Sexual when you ordered it directly from the label. As you know, this 7" was re-released by Flo, Heartfirst, which helped us a lot spreading our music overseas. Then we have the split 7" with Dog Soldier (HG Fact), our favorite band from Portland and very good friends, and a 7" with Deathtribe (In Crust We Thrash) who are also our good friends. Yes we are very happy with all our releases, and we have always thanked everyone who helped us on each release.

KRIEGSHÖG

MRR: Kriegshög has released an LP on prestigious hardcore labels HG Fact and La Vida Es Un Mus. I think I can speak for most people when I say that the LP is among the best and most important Japanese hardcore punk since Framtid's *Under The Ashes* LP. I think that the LP had a bit of a different sound and style than the earlier material. *Hardcore Hell* sounded more lo-fi (kind of like Frigöra), but the LP has a much heavier hardcore sound. Can you say something about what you wanted to do with the LP? Did you have any specific ideas about how you wanted to make the album different from the sound and style of Kriegshög on the 7" records?

Masaki: The 7" is, in my opinion, the ideal shape to release hardcore music. You can just be tense and powerful as fuck, and throw all your energy into the record and it becomes a good 7". That's how we did all the 7"s. We knew recording the LP the same way would make it really boring and people would get tired. So we did record in a different way, I'm not telling you how, but you picked up a good point. The idea of the LP was to express everything what we had done in the past five years. So we mixed old and new songs.

MRR: How long did you work on writing the songs for the LP? Did it take a long time to record the album?

Masaki: It's either Tera or Shingo who makes the songs. When the song is done, I write lyrics that fit the image of the song. Yes, it did take a while to record the album. I don't remember, but I think we spent about ten days in Noise Room from recording to mastering.

MRR: Why did you decide to release the album on HG Fact and La Vida Es Un Mus? Are you pleased with how it came out?

Masaki: HG Fact has always supported us since the tour with Dog Soldier, and I have known the owner since I was a teenager. He had asked us first to do an LP on HG Fact, and there was no reason to say no. La Vida Es Un Mus is also a really good label I think, and I checked out their releases—Anger Burning, Invasion, Delirium Tremens—before meeting Paco, the guy who runs the label. We met him when we played in Osaka, and he said he really liked us on stage. He was cool and we became friends instantly. It's always nice to have someone we knew and who have seen us play to release our stuff. That's the same with Heartfirst, Hardcore Survives, In Crust We Thrash. Of course we like it! If we didn't, we would have burnt the master.

MRR: How has the response to the LP been from fanzines and magazines?

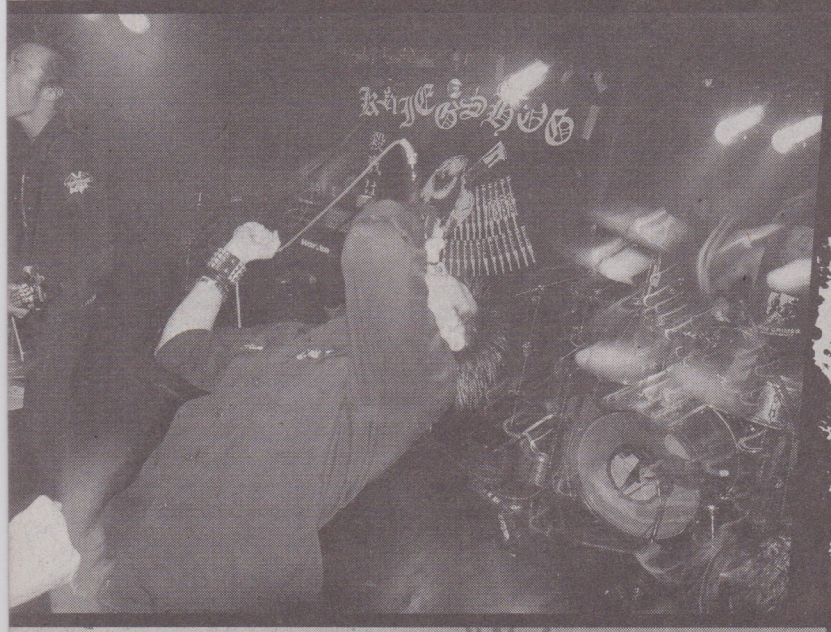
Masaki: I haven't really seen any yet.

MRR: What do you mean by "New Wave of Brutality & Hardcore Massacre?" It sounds like a manifesto! Or a statement that describes what Kriegshög is about... and it also sounds very cool (ha ha)!

Masaki: We just like to fuck around with words, haha! Shingo and I are into all the NWOBHM stuff and we just wanted to make up something that describes us. Sounds cool? I think so too.

MRR: I think you said in the *Evil Minded* interview that Kriegshög lyrics are not very important or the lyrics are stupid. Do you think hardcore punk is important and more than just music and as an alternative lifestyle?

Masaki: Well, when I make lyrics, I am serious about



them, but I don't care if people pay attention to it or not. Hardcore punk is music, but it means more to me, and I'm sure it means more to a lot of people. It gave us chances to meet people, make relations, it spread my world. I learned both the good and bad sides of people from punk.

MRR: In Europe and in the USA and elsewhere, hardcore punk is sometimes thought of as a political form of protest (anti-war, anti-government, and anti-capitalism). What are the political opinions of Kriegshög? Are you pacifists? Do you care?

Masaki: We really don't care. We hate war, we hate government, we hate capitalism, but if I really wanted to change the world, punk music won't help. Also, I don't know war. I will fight back if attacked and I would probably kill if I had to.

MRR: I know that Kriegshög has been very active playing live gigs. Tell me something about how it is to play live with Kriegshög! Do you think having an exciting stage performance is important? I know that Kriegshög have amazing artwork on banners on stage when you play live, for example. What do you try to achieve when you play live hardcore punk music?

Masaki: I get really nervous before gigs. I don't want to see bands before I play. I feel the stage is my battlefield, so I have to burst everything out when I am up there. Adrenalin feels good.

MRR: How important is the visual appearance both on stage and on artwork for Kriegshög?

Masaki: Everything is important to us. It has to fit our sound. If we ask someone, and if we don't like it we still have to go with it. So we do everything by ourselves. Tera and I have done a few in the past, but Shingo does most of the artwork, and we like his sense. He expresses our sound well visually. On stage? I don't know...I just enjoy.

MRR: How do you feel about the acceptance that some of the young bands have had from the old japcore scene in the last few years? Basically up until not long ago the crust scene and the younger kids' scene would never really play with the traditional Japanese hardcover scene but now you have events like the HC Holocaust festival last year, which is a crazy crossover.

Masaki: Yeah, it's just amazing that we get to play with Forward, Warhead, and all the other bands I've been listening since I was a teenager. I would have never imagined that when I was like fifteen, sixteen. The younger punx like me grew up with their music and we love them. I think the older punx have recognized our music and our scene and they are starting to have more open minds. Also there are people like HG Fact Sato-san and SO from Hardcore Survives, who have a lot of dedication to the scene, and are becoming bridges between both scenes. I think it's a great thing, people at shows get more opportunities to touch other music. HC Holocaust fest was a typical example. SO has always said that "My friends are your friends." I like it.

MRR: It is already rumoured that Kriegshög has split up. What happened? The new LP is just out and the band breaks up? Why?

Masaki: It's true. An end comes to every band and it just happened to come early for us. We never changed members in five years, and we had this mindset, when someone leaves the band, we will split. Also, our interests and taste in music have changed. We don't think we can be like Gauze, playing the same style on every release.

MRR: Do you have new bands or projects in mind now that the band is splitting up?

Masaki: Not right now. I want to concentrate on

Chaos in Tejas in June, and I will start thinking from there.

MRR: Do you think you have achieved what you set out to achieve with Kriegshög?
Masaki: We have released a 7", LP, and we toured Japan, and if we play in the U.S. that's our dream come true. I think we have achieved a lot, since all of us have jobs, there are members with a family, kids. I mean life in Japan is hard, it's been crazy. It's a shame that we couldn't tour Europe and other countries.

MRR: Okay, so you mentioned in your earlier email that Kriegshög might do some farewell gigs. Maybe even overseas. Do you want to say something more about that?
Masaki: See you in Texas.

MRR: Do you have more Kriegshög unreleased songs? Will there be any more Kriegshög records?
Masaki: No, the discography is out from HG Fact.

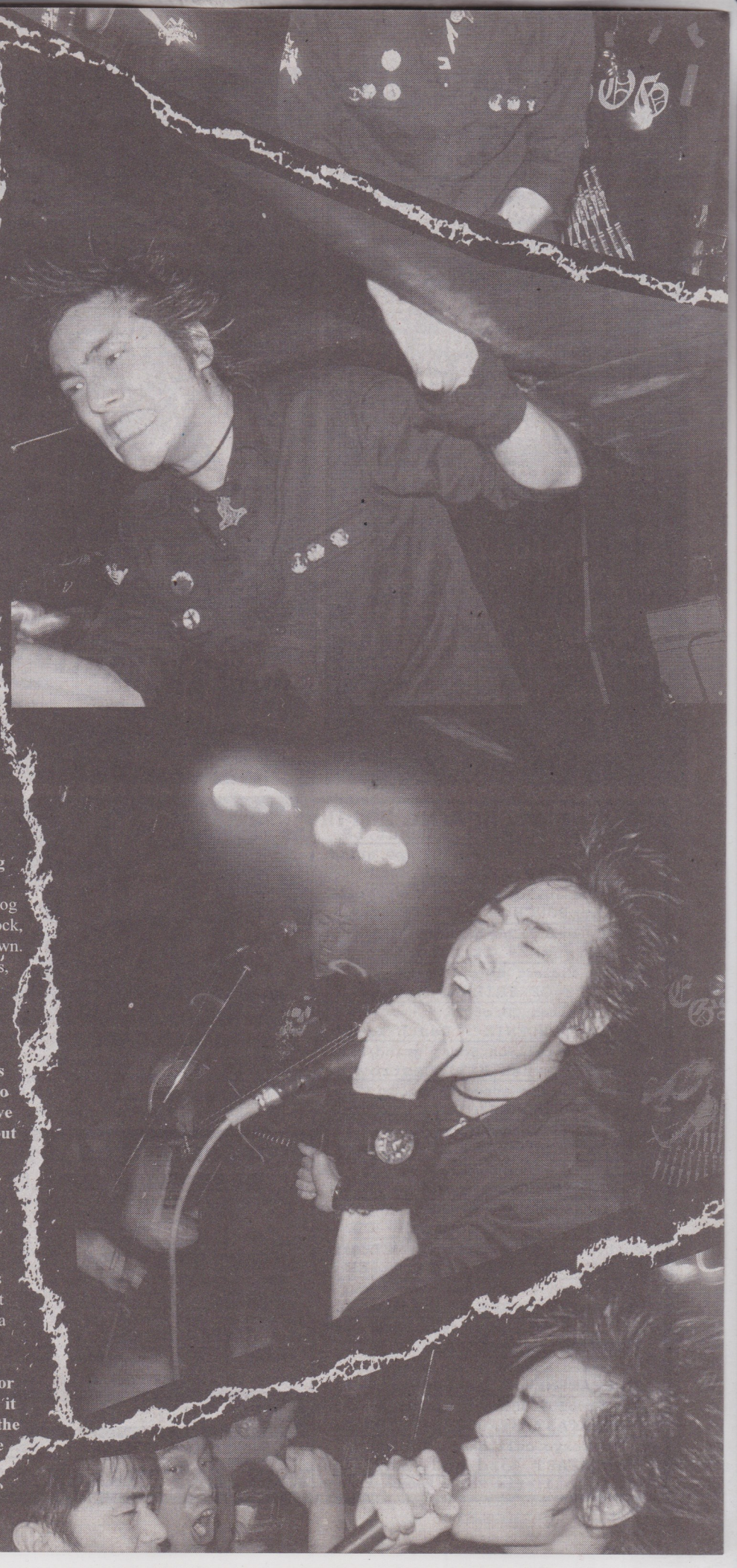
MRR: What music do you listen to?
Masaki: I listen to more metal now. Stuff like Bleak House, Witchfinder General, Demon Pact, Legend, Angel Witch, etc.

MRR: What are your favorite Japanese bands that are playing today?
Masaki: Isterismo, Rednecks, Zenocide, Akutare, Haava, Avfall, G.A.T.E.S, Life, Framtid, D-Clone, Tantrum, Unarm, Skizophrenia, Death Dust Extractor Acrostix, Disturd, Total Noise Accord, Contrast Attitude, Fastkill, Asocial Terror Fabrication, Crossface, Warhead, Ferocious X, Persevere, Screwithin, Forward, Sacrifice, Ecroached...ah! I know there's a lot more to mention.

MRR: What are your favorite overseas bands playing today?
Masaki: Inepsy, Spectres, Lebenden Toten, Deathcharge, Dog Soldier, Attentado, Destino Final, Sonic Ritual, Hellshock, Fy Fan, Motörhead...oka, there's too many to write down. I'm really excited to see Nervskade. From recent releases, Criaturas and Vacuum 7" was great! Daiki, the guitar guy of Vacuum is my old friend, we went to the same high school.

MRR: In USA and in Europe there are many debates about the death of punk fanzines and how there are too many stupid internet blogs. Do you read fanzines? Have you read *Maximumrocknroll*? What do you think about punk and the internet?
Masaki: Yes I read fanzines, and *Maximumrocknroll* too. Maybe it's the same way *Doll* ended, there were too many stupid articles and boring interviews of bands we didn't want. I'm sure that some of the readers of *MRR* feel the same way seeing our interview. I have to admit that the internet is easier to look for information, but some zines have amazing designs and artwork, which I think makes it cooler. It's not about which media is used, I think it's just a matter of effort.

MRR: Right this is it! Again, thank you very much for answering this very long interview. We all know that it can be a pain in the ass to do stuff like this because of the language barrier! Please, if you would want to say some last words to the readers of *Maximumrocknroll*?
Masaki: FACK YOU ALL!!! FACKERS!!



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TEARGAS

Since having the pleasure of witnessing them tearing it up at Such is Life Festival in 2007, I have been a big fan of Teargas. Bands like Bastard, Judgement and Kings of Punk *era Poison Idea came to mind! They oozed unadulterated energy and send the crowd into madness every time. Besides being a wicked band, they are all round nice guys and have been active in the Brisbane punk scenes for many years. After years of partying in OZ they are now hitting the US this May! Do yourself a favor and go check them out!*
Interview by Yeap
Photos by Shaun Tenzenmen, Alex Gillies, Tom Hall and Innez Tulloch.

MRR: Brief history about Teargas! Lineup and how you guys came to be.
Mikel plays bass. Lee plays drums. Geordie and Will play guitar. Neil on vocals.
Mikel: Teargas was formed partly out of the ashes of a couple of our previous bands dying/finishing up at around the same time, and partly from the urge to make something comparable to the bands we all worship. Brisbane is a pretty desolate place as far as good music goes; but the five of us get by on playing in this band, sharing music with each other, and the drive to avoid getting ground into the dust by a city that seems at odds with us at every turn.
Lee: At the time I joined, I didn't know the others so well. I was a newcomer to punk shows. At that point, Will was playing guitar in my other band, Insurgents. He asked me if I wanted to drum in this Japanese-influenced hardcore band the others were forming. I didn't really know what that meant. I do remember that after the first practice, I mentioned to somebody that it "reminded me of *Kill 'Em All*. Somehow this got back to them very quickly, and apparently it was very funny.
Neil: The statistics: First show at the end of 2007 and we've played approximately one million times locally between now and then. Toured the east coast of Australia once with Swedish champions Fy Fan, and outside of that have played Melbourne four times, Sydney twice and Adelaide once. Released a six-song demo tape in mid 2008 that looked great but sounded terrible. We had one extended hiatus at the end of 2008 while Will was in the UK living in squalor and playing in Fashion with a bunch of other ex-pats. Upon his return in mid-2009, we received some surprise copies of the demo bootlegged to polycarbonate 10". This was an elaborate practical joke by Lewis from No Patience Records, and is a cool toy that sounds terrible. The demo was or is available again on Greek tape label Scull Crasher. In mid-2009, we released a self-titled 7", which should still be available from Havoc Records in the US and in some European and Japanese distros, but sold out from the label and us. And *Kill 'Em All* rules.

MRR: Tell us a bit about the Brisbane punk scene, past and present. It has been very healthy lately, with lots of shows, touring bands and great local bands. Good vibes all around! Do you reckon this had something to do with having your own DIY space [Burst City]?
Will: I think that Burst City had something to do with it. It was also good for Teargas to have a home base where we could practice and play shows. There's a pretty unpretentious atmosphere in Brisbane: a sense that we're all in this redneck city together, we might as well make our own fun. People aren't really looking over their shoulders at the show to check who's watching, they're just focused on enjoying bands, or getting messy. Having said that, Brisbane has only pulled it together in the last few years. Before that it was a mish mash of ska/punk/metal bands.
Lee: Burst City was the most versatile DIY venue I've seen here in the past few years. Lots of types of bands played and enjoyed it, and you ended up with much more diverse audiences at all the shows, though

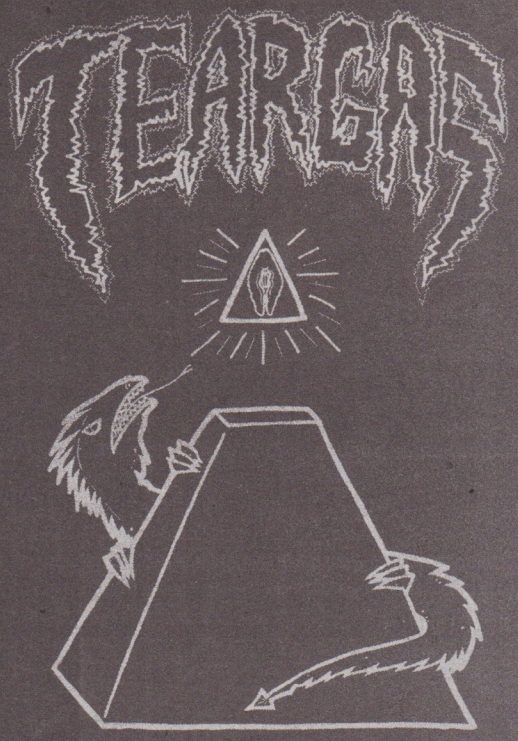
some people could have learned to respect it instead of just making use of its benefits, then walking all over it.
Geordie: I've had a lot of fun in the Brisbane punk scene, but it's a very apathetic town sometimes. Very few bands leave our state very often and a lot don't really release much. Other bands I've been in have been just as guilty of this. Realistically there has been very little note-worthy punk/hardcore from our town in the last ten years. Lately it's been getting a bit better but things come in waves.

MRR: Now that Burst City has finished up, what impact do you think its closure will have on the Brisbane punk scene?
Will: It's hard to say really. Brisbane is an odd place. Hopefully people will start to contribute more, upon realizing Burst City is gone, and what it is they miss about it. it should mean more time to write Teargas songs too.

MRR: Your 7" is the first release on Hardcore Victim. Are you happy with how it turned out? HCV is also releasing the 12" you recently recorded. What can we expect from that?
Neil: The 7" turned out pretty well I think. It feels good to have catalogue number one on what is set to become a legendary label. Even in its early stages, HCV is already a pretty good snapshot of what is going on in the way of "international hardcore" in Australia at the moment, and I'm grateful someone is capturing it. The 12" we have in production is called *The Way Of All Flesh*, and is maybe heavier and a little more epic, but not too far removed from what

we were doing on the 7", and we're really looking forward to having it out there being heard.

MRR: What are the lyrics in your songs about?
Neil: I like to write about human nature, the fears that come along with existence, and the conquering of them by not being a feeble bastard/fucking scapegoat. They will usually come from something I have read. For example, "The Sound of the Hammers Must Never Stop" from the 7" is a combination of imagery from HP Lovecraft's short story *Dreams in the Witch House* and an issue of the Swamp Thing comic. The former is about a man renting a room that is a gateway to another dimension. The latter is where I first heard of the legend of the real-life Winchester Mystery House: an heiress to the Winchester rifle company fortune, under the advice of a psychic, used the money to have a house constructed 24 hours a day for 38 years to appease the spirits of those killed by her ancestors'



rifles. The song is about how unhealthy and all-consuming the drive to create can be and the importance of breaking through and satisfying it. In a sense, that is the philosophy of Teargas: in spite of everything, make what demands to be made.

MRR: So far for all your releases and most of your t-shirt designs have a very distinct feel. Do you give directions to the artist about what you lot want? Or do you just take what he gives you? Also, I find your serpent vagina t-shirt interesting! Who came up with the idea and what is it?
Mikel: I'm the one responsible for drawing the Reptilian Vagenda shirt. The idea came from either me or Neil, but it probably can be traced back as far as three or four years ago when most of us were living together in Brisbane's premier punk residence, Tiger Haus. At the time, the only real furniture in the place was a couple of couches, a stereo, and a half-deflated basketball; so most of our time was spent bleary eyed, discussing which guitar solos were blazing enough to awaken the sphinx. Combining that with my fascination and faith in the Reptilian Agenda, and the cheeky rudeness of bands like Lip Cream and the Comes resulted in the artwork in question. Only when you have gazed into the all-seeing vageyena enough, will its truths unlock. With the exception of that shirt, all of our artwork has been handled by Murdoch Stafford. He's always managed to come up with excellent artwork for us based on the lyrics and concepts that we throw at him. I think that the artwork therefore is a product thematically of Neil's lyrical content and Murdoch's style.
Neil: Also, Mikel handled the ever-enduring cartoon gas grenade, and SpiderXDeath from Deathcage did a cool poster for one of our shows with a hand holding a necklace of ears. Murdoch is a good friend who has really put time into developing his skills and has been churning out some wild artwork of late. It's been cool to have part of our aesthetic defined by a great artist, and I'm looking forward to a couple of pieces that he has coming up for us.

MRR: On the Fy Fan tour, is it true, Neil, that you didn't stop talking for 24 hours? Any juicy tour shenanigans you care to share?
Neil: True. The hammers must never stop.
Will: Not really much juicy shenanigans, aside from Peter wanting to murder Lee for stealing a grocery bag from him.
Lee: When I caught up with you guys a day later in Melbourne, I brought him a fresh one all the way from Brisbane, so he should just chill out.

MRR: Explain the term "punisher" to the world! Did this term start in Brisbane?
Neil: I'm pretty sure it's a Sydney term, but the act of punishment almost certainly originated here. No need to explain. When it happens, you will know.

MRR: You guys have toured a few times interstate now and are building up a lot of eager fans. Now you are taking the Brisbane punishment global. Tell us about the upcoming US tour. What can the punks stateside expect from a bunch of hooligans from down under? Who can party the hardest in the band?
Neil: Our man Greg Daly is on the spot sorting it out for us as we speak. Onstage, punks stateside can expect eight flailing arms producing heavy metal-tinged hardcore punk, with an idiot bellowing about misunderstood intellectual concepts over the top of it for twenty minutes. Offstage, punks can expect to be grilled for information on Poison Idea and local crass slang by five rabid yet apologetic men whose accents they won't be able to understand. Take us to the Winchester Mystery House please. As for the term "party," we are unsure what you mean. We are grown men who struggle with youth slang.

MRR: Besides Teargas, do you fellas play in other bands past and present? Do other projects?
Lee: Well Insurgents are less active now that we live across two states. I also play in a noisy shoegaze band called Loomer, and have finished up drumming in Slug Guts.
Geordie: I play in another band called Dick Nasty, weird all over the place punk. Not for everyone. Neil has sung in Draft Dodger, Bjelke Petersen Youth amongst others. Mikel played in Short Straw Warfare and Drunk With Power, and Will played guitar in Black Mariah and for a time in Insurgents. Mikel and Will played in Covercharge, you guessed it, a Discharge covers band, which has morphed into the band Last Chaos.

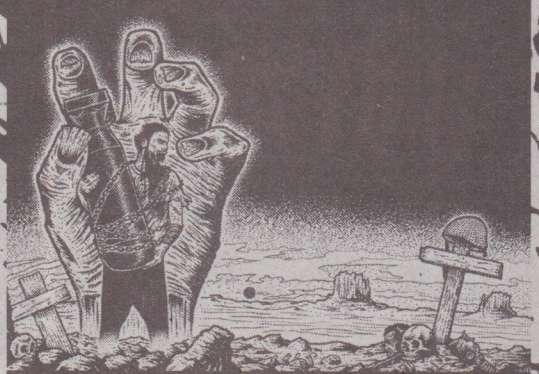
MRR: Lee, you are moving to Melbourne. Does this mean you gonna travel back and forth for the band?
Lee: I want to keep playing and will travel back, but not to do every single show we get asked to play. If there's something fun and worthwhile I'll try and make it. More so, I'll come back to record and rehearse, in anticipation of global and interstate punishment.

MRR: Future plans?
Neil: Well, we already have a few new songs in the works, and we will continue to write more. The hammers must never stop.

US TOUR

MAY
18: LA
19: LA
20: SF
21: EAST BAY
22: DAY OFF
23: PORTLAND
24: SEATTLE
25: BOSTON
26: PROVIDENCE @ AS220 W/ DROPDEAD, DOOM
27: NYC @ EUROPA W/ DROPDEAD, DOOM
28: PHILLY @TBA W/ TRAGEDY
29: RICHMOND
30: BALTIMORE @ MEMORIAL DAY MELTDOWN ALL DAY MINI FEST
31: NYC @ TBA W/ DEATH FIRST

JUNE
1: DALLAS
2: CHAOS IN TEJAS
3: CHAOS IN TEJAS
4: CHAOS IN TEJAS



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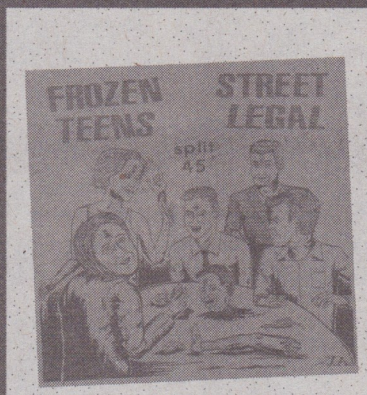

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Hygiene

An oddball gang of punker visionaries, impeccably attired and jacked up on high grade suburban menace, Hygiene are spoiling for a ruck. Cutting through the smog with their smart retro-futurist racket, they've just released a full length LP on La Vida Es un Mus Records. We went to the pub to celebrate.

Interview by Bryony Beynon and Gema Louise Oliver

MRR: Your LP is literally out today, would you say you're happy with it?

Nat: Yeah. We had a lot of issues with it in the lead up to it coming out; there was some aggro so it's good to have it all out and all done.

Rich: Especially when you see it in the flesh, it's nice to have a finished product.

MRR: I think it's fair to say that many of our favourite punk bands didn't do the best job of going from the single to LP format, producing some infamous duds along the way. Was this a worry for you at all?

Pat: We compromised on that by doing a 45rpm album.

Nat: Like *All Skrewed Up*. We probably should have already broken up after the first 7", in honour of our influences.

MRR: Who did the artwork?

Nat: A friend of mine named Jo Coates, she painted it for us, in real life it's even more impressive. She did a cover for our friend's band in that 1970s sci-fi style, and we thought that her artwork would be perfect for us.

Pat: The Post Office Tower seemed an apt choice as it was in keeping with the overall modernist vibe. It's also fits in with many of the anachronistic references on the album—Polytechnics, O-Levels, the SPG—as it's now known as the BT Tower. The old name refers back to a time when the GPO had the monopoly on telecommunications, before privatisation wiped out this sort of thing. The GPO doesn't exist now, either.

Nat: Also, the revolving restaurant was bombed by the Provisional IRA and eventually closed down as a security risk, which I thought was fitting. Closed to the public, it's like a ruin of socialist Britain, looming over London.

Rich: And her fee was a bottle of Irish whiskey, which I was quite impressed with.

MRR: The three bands you always get compared to are The Fall, Television Personalities and Crisis. What do you make of this, in terms of suitability and intentions?

Guy: I don't like Crisis, I have two Fall albums and I've heard one Television Personalities song,

Pat: I can see the Crisis or Warsaw sound, but we certainly didn't set out to sound like any of those bands as you just heard Guy writes most of the guitar parts and doesn't even like them.

Nat: They are easy reference points, we have monotone rambling vocals, so someone might hear The Fall, you got your TVPs in the shambolic melodies, maybe the dark heavy bass riffs make people hear Crisis. It's a sort of shorthand. Sean "Fat Bob" Forbes reckons Alternative TV and that's also a decent reference point. Aside from Guy, we like those bands you mentioned, but we originally set out to be a band in the Britpunk obscurity mould... the more "post" dynamic came from Guy wanting us to sound less punk-by-

numbers. The thing is, the Fall were labelmates of Sham 69 and Chelsea, Alternative TV and the TVPs were in the first wave. These bands weren't seen as post-punk at the time.
Rich: I am a big fan of all those bands, though. The Fall are one of my favourites. I saw them live recently, so nothing wrong with anyone of those comparisons for me.

MRR: I heard you put up an actual "Guitarist wanted" ad to find Guy, which is awesome. What did it say and what's the story there?
Guy: So there was a club in London called the Dirty Water Club in the late '90s to early 2000s, they did mainly cheesy 1960s retro rock gigs, although sometimes some punk, and they let you put notices in their gig listings. Nat put in an ad that I responded to.
Nat: The influences were all stuff we sound nothing like, Killed by Death, Black Flag, Angry Samoans.

MRR: Casting the net as wide as possible.
Nat: I think Guy just took that to mean that we didn't want to sound like Paisley Underground or Chesterfield Kings, like most of the Dirty Water type bands. This was nearly four years ago. It's in the punk tradition of putting an ad in the back of Melody Maker.
Red Hot Chili Peppers comes over the PA in the Arsenal Supporters pub we have found ourselves in
Guy: Oh these guys were in that guitarist wanted ad too.
Nat: Yeah, along with Phish, Dave Matthews Band, all the greats.

MRR: Guy, do you record most of it yourself? How do you go about that?
Guy: A friend of mine named Pumuky recorded the *Town Centre* EP, but I recorded all the rest. I use a digital recorder, and we go to a rehearsal studio and use whichever microphones the studio has at the time, plus a couple of my own. I use valve preamps to try and get some analogue warmth to things, which is a suggestion that came courtesy of Jay Reatard, from whom I learned a lot. I record each instrument one at a time, and we do the vocals in the lounge of my flat to save money on rehearsal studio time. I then mix the recordings at home with input from everyone else in the band, so we all have a say in how things turn out.

MRR: You seem to like using lots of effects pedals rather than straight-forward distortion, was this a conscious decision from the start?
Guy: I actually use just one pedal, an analogue delay pedal. I used to use fuzz and distortion in other bands, but in this one I decided to go for a clean sound, which is more distinct and bright. I use a cheap hollow-body Rickenbacker copy that you can't buy any more because the company was sued by the people who designed them 40-odd years ago.

MRR: So something I wanted to talk about is the theme of work as a conceptual trope for Hygiene. It's obviously a dominant motif...
Guy: Did you just say motif?

MRR: Yeah, wanna make something of it?! Okay everyone give me your job title and a brief description of your responsibilities.
Guy: I do admin for a national mental healthy charity, I volunteer for a residential detox home for people with drug and alcohol problems, and I'm a private counsellor.
Nat: I work a pretty generic admin job in a Public Sector office. I don't do anything important, but maybe the banality and drudgery of everyday life works its way in through our lyrical themes and aesthetic, I don't know. I've recently had my job reclassified actually, so now I'm Senior Business Services, I'm no longer a Business Services Officer but a collective of services.
Rich: I work for a football stadium. I started off doing crowd control there and then I got involved in the office side of things, so I work 9-5 answering general enquiries from supporters and businesses, I speak to all sorts. Even the Spanish Royal family, crazy Nigerian chaps who ring up.
Pat: I work as a library assistant in a rapidly diminishing, disappearing, once noble profession.

MRR: Work is obviously a dominant motif in some of your songs, the record is called Public Sector, but I feel like your relationship to work is different to the archetypal punk rock relationship to it.
Guy: What's the punk relationship to work?
Nat: The absence thereof.

MRR: Yeah, the idea that the punkest way is to get by without work. There's an interesting flipside to that that I've read which suggests that a radical strategy for negotiating the need work is to do the dullest least engaging job imaginable, and save all your passion, enthusiasm, creativity and energy for "work" you do off the clock and outside of the profit motive, for example doing a band maybe. What do you make of that, like generally and in relation to Hygiene?
Richard: That makes sense.
Nat: Yeah, everyone I know who works in music, they only relate to it via their job, so I think having a sort of professional stake in it dulls your interest and warps your perspective.
Richard: I like having them kept separate.
Nat: I don't think any of us enjoy our jobs, but they have a lot more to do with our lives than punk does. Everyone needs money for rent, records, beer and threads.

MRR: I feel like you can tell a lot from the names a band didn't choose. Care to share your long list?
Nat: Sex Armada.
Richard: Watership Downsyndrome.
Nat: Fuck Off Cancer, Hate Party.
Pat: Night Feelers. We were initially called the Night Feelers.
Pat: Hygiene was the best of a bad bunch.
Richard: We had an agonising two-hour conversation where we agreed we wouldn't leave the pub until we had a name.
Nat: And we all left dissatisfied with Hygiene.
Richard: An uppercase H was my main concern.
Nat: Richard told me off for using a lowercase h.
Pat: It's graphically awkward.
Nat: Everyone misspells it too.
Richard: The literacy skills of some punk promoters are honestly shocking.

MRR: Talking of promoters, I feel like hardcore is kind of the sonic elephant in Hygiene's room. You play so many hardcore shows, but you're not a hardcore band.
Guy: FUCK Lancaster.
Nat: Yeah, bearded '90s two man power violence combos hate us. We do tend to play with hardcore bands. It's really factionalised in the UK it seems, like all your garage bands are polka-dot shirt style, and you've got your Stitches style punk rock with your leather drainpipes and white creepers, and then your capital P punk.

MRR: Naturally fashion based distinctions, Nathaniel.
Nat: We have had a lot of support from certain quarters of hardcore, from yourself and Ellis and whatnot. The hardcore scene here seems to b e

the most accepting of a band like us that doesn't really fit in. We do have some fellow travellers like the Pheromoans, Black Time and so on, but it seems like they're just as isolated as us.

MRR: Pat you used to be in Among the Missing—they existed within hardcore, surely?

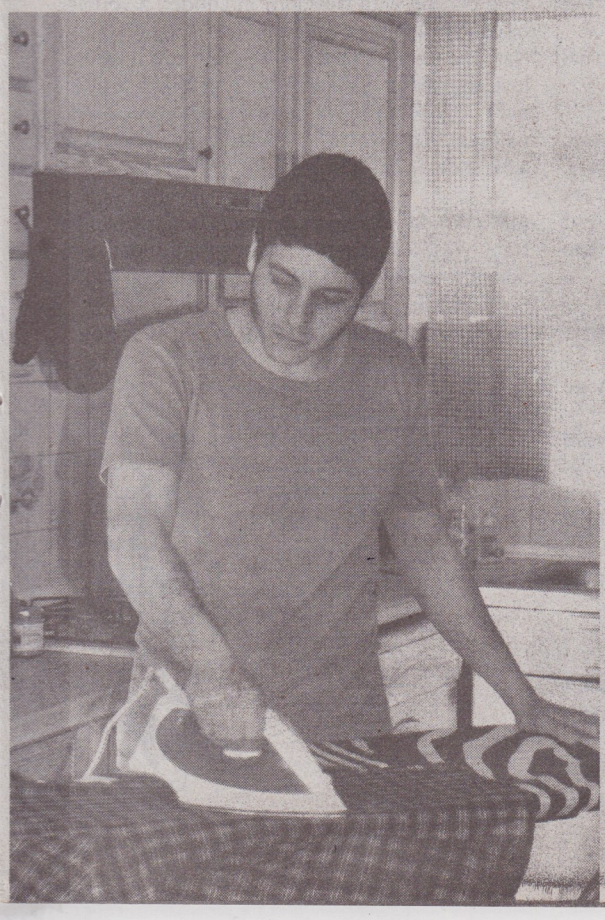
Pat: The thing is, as much as I enjoyed my time doing it, after I'd finished in those bands, I was so done with down tuned guitars, endless shouting. Time and a place for it really.

Rich: I've never really liked hardcore, I'm more into classic punk and some sixties stuff.

Nat: Being from Toronto, I was always around hardcore, but I've never been all that engaged with it. I liked it when we played a Big Takeover and some crusty shouted "Play a fast one!' when we'd just finished our fastest song.

MRR: You must have been into something dodgy when you were a teenager though?

Nat: Yeah I mean pop-punk and political stuff, then when I was about 17 I got into Oi! which set me off into collecting old UK punk records. I was never super into hardcore but always around that record collector mentality, and those people who are into old hardcore have more of a sense of aesthetics and trying to make the record sound right and look right, that definitely stayed with me.

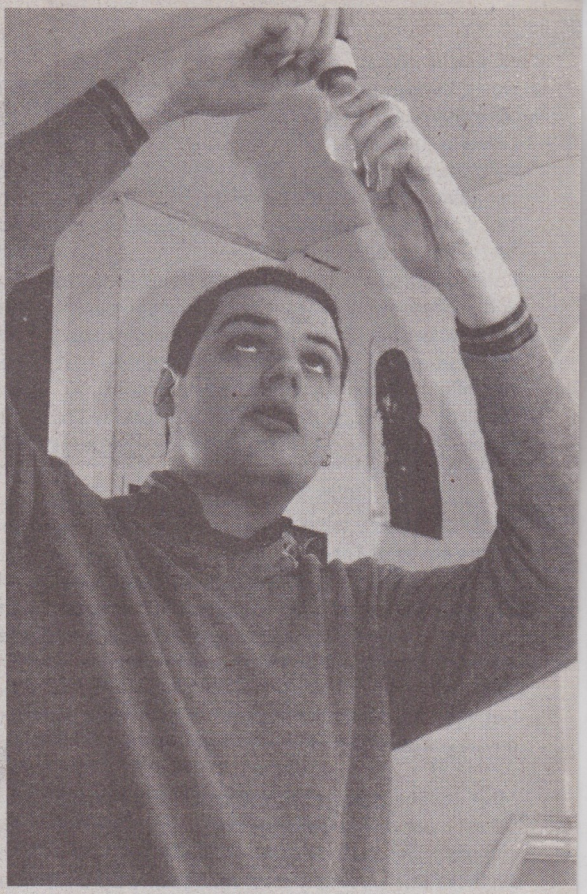


MRR: In reviews and generally people make this point about Hygiene being "English as fuck" or at least British sounding, which is interesting because you have a Canadian accent. Do you think your accent gives you this freedom to maybe not be worried about things coming across like a pastiche?

Nat: The thing is there's a bit of reverb and distortion on the vocals so some people don't notice, and there's so many bands who are all British who sing in these mid-Atlantic accents, or even like the Users who affected an American accent.

Richard: Or even Loyd Grossman who sung in an American accent.

Nat: Loyd Grossman is American!



MRR: He's from Boston right?

Nat: He's American educated in Toronto. What is it, The News?

MRR: The New forbidden.

Richard: I met him and asked what his favourite pasta sauce was.

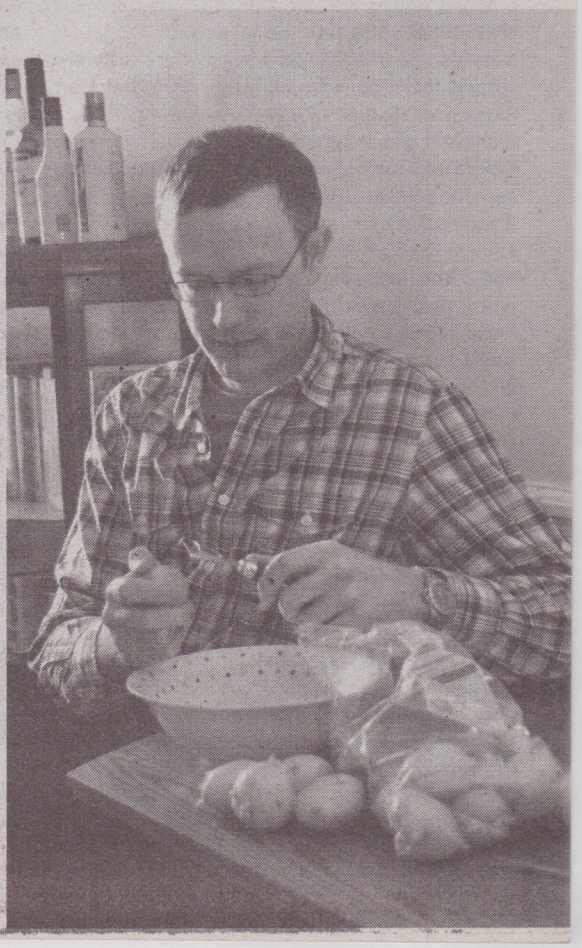
Pat: Jet Bronx!

Nat: Yeah "Ain't Doin Nothing." You know I do have to walk a tightrope between sounding too nasal or too snotty for this type of band and sounding totally contrived. Some slang I could use might sound ridiculous, but then my Dad is English, I've lived here for six years it's seeped into my vocabulary.

MRR: Do they say "Hoover" in North America (as opposed to vacuum) cos you use that in one song.

Nat: No! So yeah there's one, there's a pastiche.

Richard: It's only natural you'd draw on cultural references. I mean I'm British through and through, but I've lived in a lot



of places. When Russia started opening up I was growing up—my Dad was one of the first businessmen to go over to the Soviet Union, and I lived in the states and Hong Kong.
Nat: The next Hygiene record will have a strong Canadian influence, it'll be all about partying at The Cottage, knocking back two-fours, driving on the open road, wolves, moose...
Pat: Going back to lyrics, I grew up in Croydon and Richard lived in Stevenage, from our point of view that's an influence. They are sort of post-War commuter towns, city but not quite, that sort of suburban feel, a kind of void of culture.
Richard: I think you can perhaps tell we're interested in those kinds of buildings through the imagery.

MRR: Definitely, what is the town in question on the cover of *Town Centre* EP?
Pat: That's Croydon. It's the Whitgift, the old shopping centre. It used to be a quite concrete brutalist and now it's a lot more open plan, with a kind of opiate effect, I guess to make people spend money.
Nat: It's Croydon but the point is that it could be anywhere, any one of the "new towns."

MRR: It seems like glass and steel girders have taken over the structural language of British suburbia, like you say that opiate effect, shiny surfaces but all totally interchangeable up and down the country.
Guy: Our 7" with the Human League cover on has an image of a building on it which was demolished, and the space that was left is where I live now, sort of East of Hackney, it's Hackney Wick.
Richard: We don't really sing about buildings but it's a motif that crops up, looking back on it.

MRR: What's size zero model about?
Nat: It's one of our older songs where we were writing more punk by numbers ones, but wait Richard wrote it so why am I answering?!
Richard: I was in a hurry to write the lyrics and picked up a tabloid newspaper and used the size zero model scare. It's some good advice actually if you're stuck for words, pick up a tabloid.

MRR: The last song on the record is spoken word, pretty much, and has total Scritti Politti before they went shit vibes, I have to say was really surprised to hear it something like that on the record, tell me about that song.
Pat: One of the things about doing an LP, the last song has to be twice as long as the others, it's the one you fuck around with.
Nat: Either unlistenable feedback or anything to encourage the listener to switch off.
Pat: Like "Dreams Recurring" by Husker Du.
Nat: Or the answering machine song at the end of the Stiff Little Fingers *Inflammable Material.*
Guy: It needs to be noted that Christopher David Beck wrote that song, all two of the bass notes, but he doesn't get a credit 'cos we forgot.
Nat: It's called "A Passion For Administration." The words are actually my job application, but the other three got a chance to get to have their voices on there, I didn't think it would be appropriate to have my voice on there. It was my concept though!
Richard: Before I got the job at the stadium I spent quite a lot of time unemployed, and there is something so soul-destroying about that repetition of constantly applying and hearing nothing. I think its something a lot of people might relate to.
Nat: Oh, to clarify, I was referring to the lyrics, it was Guy's idea to do a long, boring song! It was also to do with filling up space at that end of a record.
Pat: Although many of our songs are jokey, I think that does show the sense of dread and self-hate you start to feel filing in application forms. Trying to sell yourself and knowing it's going to end in failure.
Guy: I would like to emphasise at this point that the LP is all killer and no-filler.

MRR: What's the most money you've ever won gambling and what tips would you have for people?
Nat: Do it every day and in your lunch hour.
Richard: Wander down the bookies, buy some sweets and have a gamble on the roulette machine. Which we have a song about.
Nat: The most I've won was fifty quid, at a casino in Tottenham Court Road.
Richard. A big difference is how easy it is to gamble here compared to the USA, every high street has a betting shop. A minority of people do have a problem with it, the majority don't.
Nat: It's the only successful industry left. I used to play roulette on the fixed odds betting terminal every day on my lunch break until I lost £40 in about two minutes. I used to just put a few quid on, but that day something inside me took over.
Richard: Do you ever gamble, Pat?
Pat: Never. Where I live in Deptford there are about ten gambling shops on one high street and that's a bit excessive.
Nat: See, if they put a fixed odds betting terminal in your library that might sort things out!
Guy: That's a contribution to the "Big Society."
Richard: With the amount of tax revenue raised, the gambling shops probably pay for the library. Last night Nat and I went to the greyhound track in Wimbledon, which was a great night out but more about having some chips and a pint than gambling.

MRR: Now, I avoided questions about clothes because I don't have the knowledge.
Pat: Someone once called us "Shiny shoed bastards."
Nat: That was the fine people of Lancaster! Thrones, Ruins? One of those bands?
Pat: Hammers. It was that band Hammers.
Nat: Shoes should have a high shine! And people ought to take pride in that.
Pat: Shining old leather boots is not about vanity, it's about getting your money's worth.
Nat: And longevity. Punks need to engage in a regime of proper shoe care.
Guy: Frankly, it's wasteful not to! The shoes don't last as long and that's bad for the environment.

MRR: Do you ever think you put off certain punk gig goers with your attire?
Richard: Sometimes I have been to gigs and been aware of being the only ones not wearing jeans.
Nat: Or that we have our shirts tucked in. I like the idea of walking into the pub and people knowing we're the band. You don't get that so much anymore. It's not on purpose but I don't mind it, it's other people's problem really.

MRR: Bunch of herberts, then?
Pat: We stick with the herberts.
Nat: We're for the kids in the street. Herberts, skins. Punks, mods.
Rich: Everyone's welcome.
Nat: Ravers, crusties, anarcho-dub fans...
Pat: No crusties, seriously. Casuals are welcome, if they cause no trouble.
Guy: We have a very strict all-encompassing equal opportunities policy with regard to the band.
Pat: Except crusties.

MRR: Do you enjoy playing live?
Pat: I'd rather play less regularly and have more fun gigs, than play twice or three times a week as in previous bands.
Nat: I can't leave the house without spending £40 on drinks, so it's a bit counterproductive to play too many gigs. We're all at the point in life where we prefer to stay in.

MRR: What's the last show you went to that you didn't play?
Nat: You can see by the silence that we are struggling.
Guy: I can't remember. Most of the bands that I like come from America and they don't come here because it's too expensive. Anything related to Goner records would be good to see, or anyone from Memphis. We had a really good time playing with NoBunny in London a couple of years ago, that was fun.
Nat: The Real Numbers were great too. I would love to play, or just see more gigs like that over here. I think in the UK punk is quite ghettoised, whereas in the North American scene people are a bit wider in their tastes.

MRR: Would you like to get over there and tour?
Nat: Yes, absolutely, it's really just an administrative thing at this point, booking it.
Richard: It'll happen one day.
Nat: The New British invasion.

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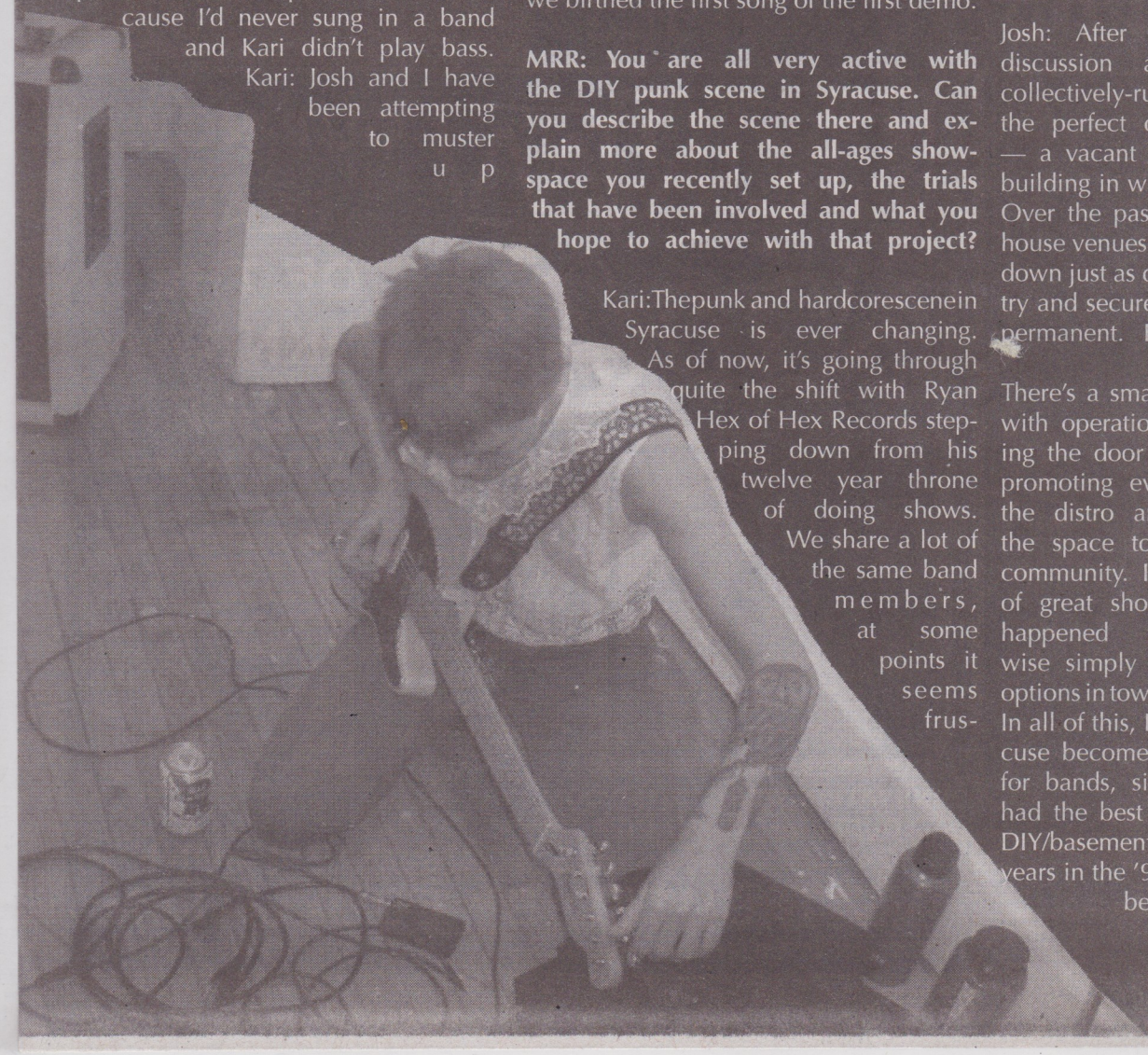
Shoppers

SHOPPERS, A THREE PIECE FROM SYRACUSE, NY, MAKE THE MOST EVOCATIVE AND ALLURING NOISE, A PUNK ROCK AWASH WITH MAGIC POSSIBILITY. I SPOKE TO MEREDITH (GUITAR+VOICE) JOSH (DRUMS) & KARI (BASS.)

INTERVIEW BY BRYONY BEYNON



MRR: Hey Shoppers! How long have you been a band, and can you describe the circumstances and events of your first practice or jam session in as much detail as you care to recall?

Meredith: We've been together since January 2010, not very long. Our first practices were super awkward because I'd never sung in a band and Kari didn't play bass.

Kari: Josh and I have been attempting to muster up a project for a number of years, so when Meredith came along it was almost instant that we started discussing band ideas. Our first practice and many after were held at my house. None of us had any real idea of what we were aiming for. We drank coffee and played covers of Agent Orange and Dead Boys. By the end of the first practice, we birthed the first song of the first demo.

MRR: You are all very active with the DIY punk scene in Syracuse. Can you describe the scene there and explain more about the all-ages show-space you recently set up, the trials that have been involved and what you hope to achieve with that project?

Kari: The punk and hardcore scene in Syracuse is ever changing. As of now, it's going through quite the shift with Ryan Hex of Hex Records stepping down from his twelve year throne of doing shows. We share a lot of the same band members, at some points it seems frustrating, but I feel it's a curse and a blessing. I can't count the number of times we had out of town bands tell us how lucky we are to have a space like the Westcott Community Center, it's one of their favorite places to play due to the family-like atmosphere.

Josh: After a year of on-and-off discussion about starting up a collectively-run all ages show space, the perfect opportunity popped up — a vacant store front in the same building in which Meredith and I live. Over the past few years in Syracuse house venues have started up and shut down just as quickly, so we decided to try and secure something a little more permanent. Badlands is the result.

There's a small group of us that help with operations, maintenance, working the door at shows, booking and promoting events, etc. I coordinate the distro and handle renting out the space to promoters within the community. It has allowed for a lot of great shows that wouldn't have happened in Syracuse otherwise simply because the few other options in town are often too expensive. In all of this, I'm just hoping that Syracuse becomes more of a destination for bands, since we haven't always had the best reputation as a smaller DIY/basement show-friendly city. For years in the '90s, we were known as a beacon for vegan straight-edge metalcore club

shows and little else. Things have changed a lot since then and I think, as far as the quality of bands and now with Badlands, we have one of the strongest scenes we've had in years.

Meredith: There haven't been many problems at all, to be honest. Enough

"From my perspective, the band represents a state of unapologetic self-acceptance; a rejection of shame."

people volunteered from day one to make Badlands into a really functional space. I think that in 2011, one of our goals is to diversify the events available to our community, by assisting people in making punk stuff that isn't punk music. I think it's important to create safe spaces where people can interact on more intimate levels than just standing next to one another at shows. I really want to encourage that.

MRR: What other bands do you consider your peers, geographically, sonically and ideologically?

Josh: There are a ton of great bands that we play with regularly here in Upstate NY: Night Owls, Oak & Bone, Hunger Pains, The Surrogates, Like Wolves, Mayflower, White Guilt (our "brother band"), Insubordinates and all of the Rotcore bands, Utah Jazz, Mayday, Total Babes, Blunt Guts. The list goes on and on.

Meredith: Some people think we sound like Rainer Maria, and we've also heard Children In Adult Jails. My biggest influences are Dinosaur Jr. and Stereolab. I also like a lot of jazz. Ideologically, I'd hope we come across a little bit like Huggy Bear. That's hoping for the best.

MRR: You describe yourselves as "pissy vegan queer punk" but the lyrics do not necessarily deal with these issues in an overly obvious or head-on way and instead seem to tell fragments of stories, which to me is very intriguing and refreshing. Was this a conscious choice?

Josh: From my perspective, the band represents a state of unapologetic self-acceptance and a rejection of shame. Being vocally queer, vocally feminist, vocally vegan isn't always met with the best response in the real world and even in some circles within hardcore but I take a lot of pride being in a band with two people that share a sense of living in accordance with our personal politics and in spite of the majority viewpoint.

Meredith: We should have been a youth crew band. I can't write straightforward, hard lyrics. I tried and they sound like self-help mantras. I'm basically writing short stories. The audience infers the importance. It's always political, I'm always commenting on something. I read an interesting quote recently along the lines of, "If you have to explain to me exactly who you are, you probably aren't." We're anti- that sort of behavior. I'm all for being proud of having certain politics, but a lot of people, especially around here, apply those labels and expect them to be read as personality traits instead of what they are, which is lifestyle choices. Self-definition can be harmful in that way — you can be vegan straightedge and abandon your children, you can be vegan straightedge and be a registered sex offender. These things are a huge part of your life, but they don't define the spectrum of your existence. And the "pissy vegan queers" thing was a joke about that, but, of course, it wasn't a lie, so it stuck. The fact that the three of us share the same core politics means we don't have to run around declaring our labels. We just get to be who we are, which allows us to

"It's like being in a band with two babies that fuck. And jerk each other off in the front seat."

be a lot weirder and have a lot more fun.

Kari: So yeah, a majority of our lyrics aren't cookie-cutter versions of vegan or queer politics. They are far more interpersonal, uncomfortable, hyper-sexual. Although, we do address our politics in a more blunt fashion in the middie of most our sets, whether that's a five minute speech on issues or just asking all the women and queers to please come to the front. Meredith: And of course, we're still billed as a "female-fronted" band. Josh

and I are waiting to make a flyer that announces us as a "male-drummered band."

MRR: Meredith, when did you start playing guitar and what snappy responses do you give to dudes who are "surprised" to see a girl playing guitar, if indeed you have experienced this kind of thing at shows?

Meredith: Thirteen years ago. And if you can believe it, no one has ever directly fucked with me. And I'm generally a very approachable person. I'm not the snappy response type; I'm not quick with words. I'd spit in their mouth. I think the whole "women can't be punk" ideology is really uncool and dangerous. The few people I've met who think that way are, more often than not, very unhappy with themselves. There are people in Syracuse who still have that attitude. Some of it is a holdover from the '90s straightedge, pro-life scene; some of it is more normalized and comes from being raised in a hateful culture. Either way I don't think that's acceptable. I don't think they understand that they're supporting the willful denial of a person's right to sexual health care. I don't think they know what they're doing when they call people faggots in their lyrics. All of these radical, vegan straight edge people are talking in terms otherwise associated with the government and the Christian right. But luckily, everyone just kind of shrugs and ignores that part of those people, and it's almost like an inside joke. So-and-so is pro-life, so-and-so is homophobic. That level of sexism isn't even real to me.

MRR: Josh, when did you start Barbarossa Records and what do you have coming up next?

Josh: Barbarossa was a label I started after high school following a couple years of bringing my distro to shows. I put out 500 run presses of records for bands that were out of the ordinary for what Syracuse has been known for punk-wise, basically releasing friends' records and trying to get them out there the best I could. My last release was a split 7" for Oak & Bone and Like Wolves but, up until that release, none of the bands I've helped ever toured extensively. It used to be that I'd maintain costs by trading with other labels and stocking my distro but nowadays, less and less people are using this as a viable option to run their labels and the days of kids bringing big boxes of records to shows seems to be an antiquated concept. I'm going to keep putting out records, because I like doing it, but I plan on changing a few things and restarting the label under a new name, Feeble Minds. I'm going to keep highlighting Upstate NY bands because there are a ton of great bands from the area that don't get enough recognition. First up is a 7" for Hunger Pains followed by an LP for Shoppers and a White Guilt EP. I'll release some tapes here and there, too.

MRR: Both tapes have had a really blown-out but distinctively warm sound that doesn't bury the vocals like many similar sounding recordings can sometimes do, how and where do you record?
Meredith: Both tapes were recorded and mixed by my friend Matt Hall at Castle Rockmoore; a Syracuse house venue that shut down shop shortly after the second demo was recorded. I recorded the vocals for the first demo after drinking a bottle of whiskey and watching a drifter kid with a lisp do really intense card tricks for an hour.

MRR: Josh and Meredith, how does being in a relationship with a fellow band member affect the process and reality of doing Shoppers, if at all?

Josh: Loaded question. Sometimes, it's hard being in a band with your partner as it adds another dynamic that, at times, can be very stressful to the relationship. I know Kari doesn't like being caught in the middle when we bicker back and forth. I believe the quote was, "It's like I'm in a band with two children that fuck." But it's also really fulfilling. We get to travel together, work together creatively and it's really unique to have someone you respect and can count on in so many different facets of your life. Gag me, right?

Meredith: I think we're very lucky. I always heard that doing this was difficult, like it's harder to be in a band with someone you love. I'm all for expanding relationship models, so it's good to be out there doing it, proving that it can be done.
Kari: It's like being in a band with two babies that fuck. And jerk each other off in the front seat. That's all I will say.

MRR: What are the best and worst reactions to your band have experienced? How do you choose to deal with negativity?

Kari: The best so far would be Ira's house show in NC. There were a decent amount of heads at the show. From start to finish we had kids crawling on the ceiling, hanging from drain pipes and barrel rolling into one another. Some one gave me a pillow. The singer of Double Negative let us come eat breakfast at his restaurant.
Meredith: That was the best. To be honest, I'm not really in touch with peoples' overall opinion of us. People say some nice things, people debate which of us is more attractive. We have a sense of humor. I deal with negativity by ignoring it and continuing to do whatever I want anyway. And there are a lot of nice people in the world who have done a lot of nice things for us, so of course I'm more focused on that.

MRR: How did Drugged Conscience come to release your first tape, and what future release plans do you have on the go? LP?!
Josh: Chris had released a demo tape for White Guilt, the band I started before Shoppers, and I shared the first Shoppers demo with him. He liked it and offered to have Drugged Conscience release it. That's that. I had met Chris a year or so prior and he and I actually grew up in the same town in south Florida. He's been ceaselessly supportive with us. Heck of a guy! We released our second tape ourselves, but if things go as planned, he's going to be helping us release our LP, which will be recorded this May/June following a tour down to Florida.
Meredith: Half of it is going to be new versions of songs from the two tapes we put out last year. Then, Kari goes back to Brooklyn and Josh and I stay in Florida for a while. My only real plan after that is to con John Fahy into hanging out as much as possible.

MRR: To end cryptically, to me, your music feels like something is happening. What?
Meredith: Pure fashion.

Josh: The redefinition of a socially constructed genderdynamic. An entity of pure energy that knows no taboo. Punkstuff.
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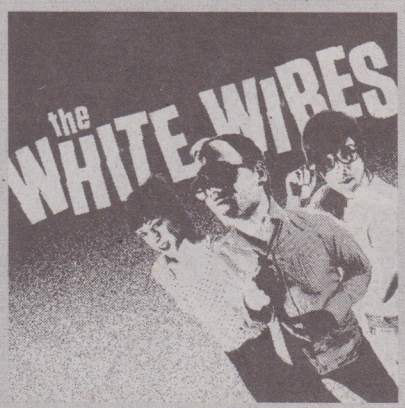

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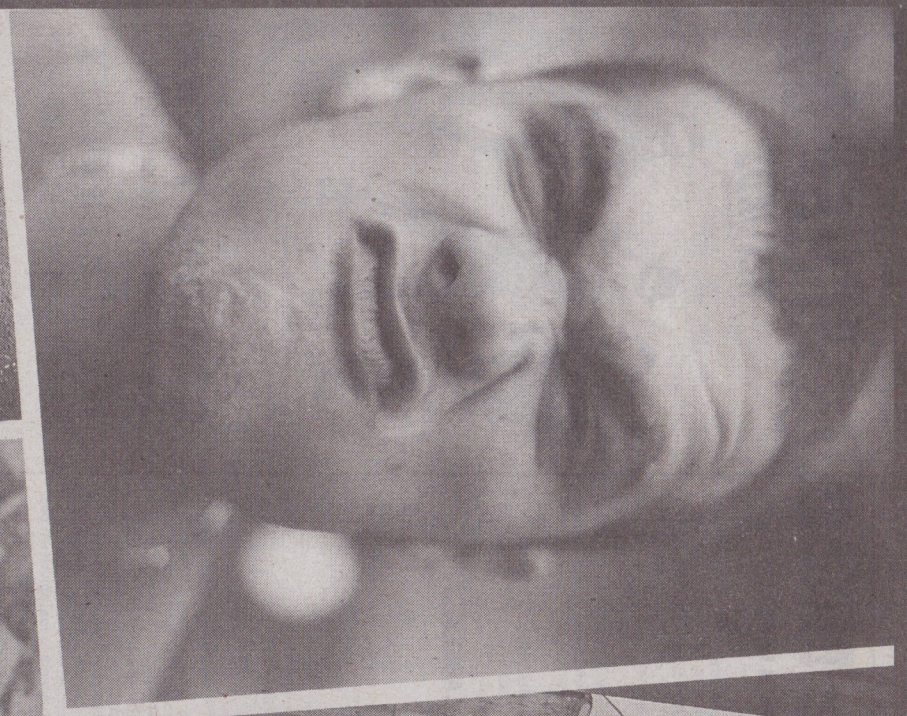

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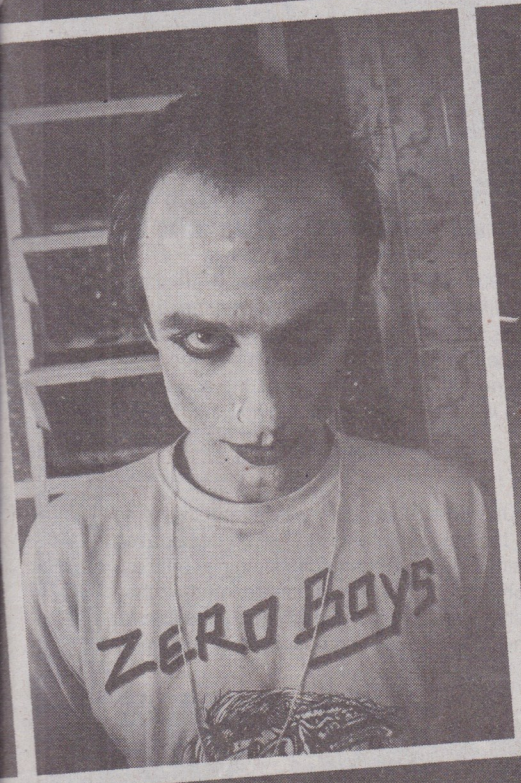
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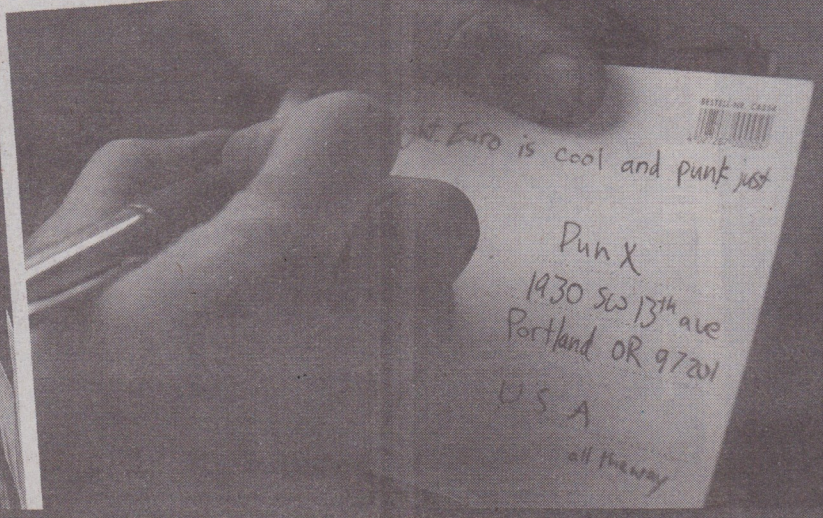
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TANTRUM

HARD CORE PUNK

Hailing from Japan, Trantrum has been playing Italian style thrashcore in the Wretched, Negazione family with influences from bands like BGK, Lärm and Mob 47 since 1999. After line up changes and the band nearly ending, they have emerged with their double EP "L'azione stupida stupida non è mai finita…Un essere umano è un sciocco senza speranza" on No Anarquia Rebelde Musica.
Interview with original member Yukihiro Shii by Kotaro from Narm Discos.

MRR: There are many Japanese bands that have sung in Italian. Why Italian?
Well, the biggest reason is that bands that sang in different languages started appearing in the '90s, and they sounded good. Personally, I believe many Japanese people think of vocals as an instrument, so different languages have different colors of sound and nuance. For us it is obviously easier to express certain messages in Japanese than other languages, but it's like the feeling when English speakers find that Japanese has its original and unique accents while speaking in our native tongue or speaking in English. Accents are good! So, Italian is great because it never takes a breath, never stops singing, it shouts. It's very unique and an awesome style as the sound has an effect of influencing and moving many people. Many '80s Italian legends had great vocals: I like the sound of each language. People should choose the ones that work for what they instrumentally want to express.

MRR: Alright. So you like both Italian and Dutch bands very much. Why?
It's because… the sound! All the elements, riff, color, and play fit together to my ear. They mix UK and US tastes in one and put their own languages on it. The end result is totally unique. I'm always excited about the dirtiest sounds, the language, and the far too devastating primitive play! I feel a great energy that comes from music that is not focused on skill. The craziness is more than I can imagine—riffs are strange, the vocals are abnormal, and they make records with disjointed play, unbelievably disorganized… It gives you more freedom than organized recordings nowadays. There is a sound called Italian hardcore. Dutch bands are a little bit different, but each band has its own characteristic—Dutch hardcore was influenced by BGK, Lärm, and Pandemonium. BGK has the greatest play and riffs, Lärm is extremely noisy and fast, and I love Pandemonium's guitar sounds.

MRR: How do you make Tantrum's sound?
I always think seriously about the sound color. I have never been satisfied with any recording sound before. The recent release on Narm Discos is the closest sound of what I had imagined. The tracks are from demo tapes recorded with cassette MTR and cheap microphones. My goal is to recreate this sound again—raw and noisy. I change pedals every time. We just keep trying—try, try, and try. Keep trying over and over again.

MRR: What do you think about sounds of foreign bands?
There are many old bands' records that sound really crazy. Present bands have better productions and cleaner sounds. The dynamics of sound and qualities of recording sounds are a lot better now. I think touring bands are good at making live sounds, but it's a little bit disappointing to see bands that sound cleaner than their records. Japanese bands are noisy and sound devastating even at gigs.

MRR: Do you want to go on tour overseas? I can go with you if you want. [Laughter].
Yeah, I wanna go once in my life, but it seems hard when I think about other members lives. You go too much! [Laughter].

MRR: Why can't you go?
It's really hard to take a long vacation if you have a normal job in Japan even though it's dependant on his or her lifestyle. If you take a week off, you may be fired. Once you lose a job, it's difficult to work as a full-time employee with good social security again. You feel dropped out of the society. Japan is not a wealthy country anymore. Young people cannot find jobs and social security cannot be expected. For example, you need to wait for three months to get paid unemployment insurance if you quit a job yourself. Moreover, you cannot get a job because of outstanding hair color or tattoos even though they have nothing to do with ability. So, many punks work as day laborers. They can take days off, but get no salaries during the tour. It is a conflict, but they work for their beloved Punk. I want foreign bands to understand how much money and efforts Japanese bands have spent on organizing tours.
MRR: Right. Some countries have great social security and unemployment benefit systems. Japan's system is quite difficult compared to my personal experience of living in a foreign country. Japanese punks sacrifice themselves for Punk.
The situation varies in each country, so I cannot say what is good or bad. For example, it is about 100,000 yen to rent a live house a day in Japan. How about foreign countries? 100,000 yen is nearly half of a month salary. What I want to say is Japanese Punks are Hardcore. We do what we want on our own terms. I do what I want to do at my own pace.

MRR: You still stay on analog formats like records and tapes. What do you think about CDs and MP3s?
I support with those formats only because it's convenient and it's good if it becomes an opportunity for more people getting interested in our music. If he or she really likes it, then they will buy our music in analog formats. I believe the goal of representing recordings is to make records, so I don't release any CDs or MP3s. Records are fine! By the way, you also put out records. Isn't it difficult to export records? Say something to people who say "too expensive!" [laughter] Tell them how hard it is to release records in Japan!

MRR: Hey, isn't this a reverse interview? It is definitely costly. For example, making 500 copies of 7" is about 1,500 US dollars including freight to Japan, and I also need to pay for tax, jackets and inserts. If $1 is 100 yen, it'll be about 180,000 yen. If I ship them to overseas, the postage comes out about $4.50 a copy. Sending five to ten copies still needs extra $2 per copy. Even if it's a new release, I need at least $8 plus postage per copy to collect the expenses. So, if I export, it's way more expensive than labels in other countries.
It's not easy. [laughter]. But I appreciate you releasing records. I'm really glad to hear from people who have listened to it overseas and contacted us.

MRR: What is your plan in the future?
As I said, I keep my own pace. I keep expanding my network of friends with people who were part of the compilation album called *Hardcore Inferno,* which was released last year. If you have not yet listened to it, I strongly recommend it. Various styles of punk bands are on it, so I hope you get interested in many more Japanese bands. And please contact bands you like!
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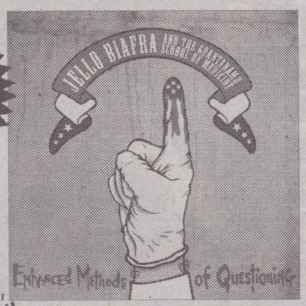

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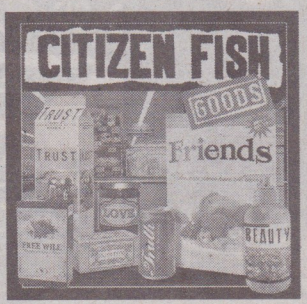

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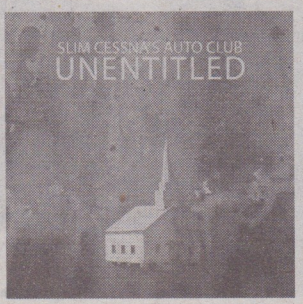

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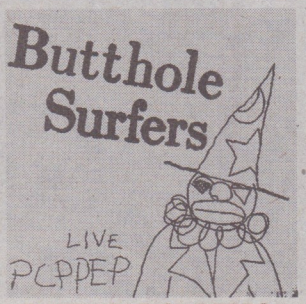

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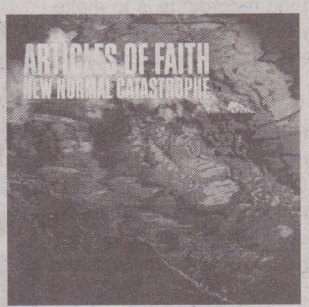

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STEVE IGNORANT'S LAST SUPPER

Interview by Kevin Dunn

MRR: I've got a whole bunch of questions here because I know you're on tour right now. You're coming to the United States, you'll be performing some Crass material, and your new book is out. But, I'm going to start somewhere completely different, because one of the things I do is I run an anarchist alternative amateur theater group, and one of the things we do are puppet shows. I happen to know, Professor Steve, that you are a puppeteer yourself. Is that right?

Yeah. I've not done it for a few years now. I did it occasionally for about nine years.

MRR: How did you get into that?

I think after I'd finished with Conflict and I decided that I wasn't going to try to do music anymore. Well, I wasn't going to be in the band anymore. Like everyone does, I thought I'd try and do a solo album of acoustic music or whatever. You won't believe this, but first I was thinking of doing an album on Jack the Ripper. And then I saw a film called *Spinal Tap*. [laughs] So, I stopped that. I remembered that when I was a child there was a traditional English puppet show that we had here in England called *Punch and Judy*. I remember it used to frighten me as a kid, and I know that a lot of people have had nightmares over this thing. I had an old Victorian script of the show in it, and the more I read it and researched it, I realized that the Mr. Punch character was being misportrayed for youth by bad show-people. In fact, the character Mr. Punch is a hunchback alcoholic cripple, who is a complete and utter anarchist. He was actually considered to be a real folk hero in Victorian times, because he could hit a policeman and not get arrested for it, and also trick the hangman into his own noose.

So, I started to write a script for a radio play about it, which never came to anything. I've still got the script upstairs somewhere. But, for inspiration, I made myself a figure of Mr. Punch, and then I thought that it would be nice to make the whole set of characters. So, I did that, and then I thought it would be nice to make a little theater to go around; so I did that. I thought since I'd done all that, I might as well do the bloody thing. So, I did and I never looked back.

MRR: One of the things you've got going on right now is your book *The Rest is Propaganda*. What brought you to the decision to write a book?

Various reasons, really. Because I'm always down the pub and I'm talking about what I've got up to, anecdotes and things, and people have said to me for a long time, "Steve, you should write a book." I was like, who the hell was going to be interested in what I've done? But then, as time went on, I've...I don't know if you know that it's been a bit of a to do with the ex-Crass members and these new releases that have come out. I started to get worried that people would only remember Crass for a typical rock band breakup, argument thing. I didn't want that to happen.

Also, a lot of the interviews that you'll read from Crass times will tend to be Penny Rimbaud and Gee and Pete Wright sometimes talking. There's not a lot of me in it. So, you only get this, and I'm not being derogatory, but you only get a one-sided idea of what Crass was like at the time. So, I decided, no, I will write a book.

It's not all about Crass. I mean Crass is mentioned in there, but it's basically my autobiography. It's from birth to now. There was a passage on Crass in there and I wanted to give my version of it of how I got to be in it, and how I came to arrive at that band, and what it meant for me to be in it. To give another, I suppose, a more working-class, a more, I don't know, to try and make it a bit more human for people.

MRR: I know Penny's book *Shibboleth: My Revolting Life* book and I know Berger's book *The Story of Crass* and Ian Glasper's *The Day the Country Died*. Those are great books. Were there things that you disagreed with that motivated you to correct the narrative? Or that you just wanted your voice out there as well?

No, I think I just wanted to put my voice out there. You see, the trouble with Penny Rimbaud is that he's really a great talker. But when you're talking, he will... like, if you're talking about a tree, I'll go to you, "yeah, a chestnut tree is a really nice tree, isn't it?" You'll go "yeah," but Penn won't. He'll come in from ten different directions. So, it's very easy for him to go off on a tangent and to pick up an idea in his head. Then he'll introduce that into what Crass used to be about and stuff. So, it's sort of true, but you get this convoluted version of it. I think some people might find it a bit...he can be a bit wordy.

I thought it's about time that I actually put my tuppence worth in, or my two cents worth, as you would say. Let people know what I felt really. There are certain things that I don't agree with Penn on, and never did, and probably never will. But, that's the nature of a beautiful friendship.

MRR: You say it covers your entire life. So much of which, I'm assuming, has been marked by Crass. You went on to Conflict, but it must be kind of difficult to have always had that Crass marking on you. Is that true? That that's what you're remembered mostly for?

Crass, for me, is the biggest thing I've ever done or ever will do in my life, I suppose. That band, for whatever reason or reasons, has had such a global impact. Look, people have bought those records and they've supported and they sent nice letters, and have kept in touch and become great friends, etc... If those people are out there buy-

ing the records that I've been on, the least I can do is give them twenty minutes of my time. What's the big deal?

And I don't mind, I think Crass was great, and I enjoyed every second of being in it... well, mostly every second of being in it. Yeah, some of the fights were a bit rough. So, I'm really quite happy to talk about it, and not in an egotistical sense.

Now, I live in a very small village in a place called Norfolk in England of about 600 people. I was in my local pub one night, and this woman came in. She was a bit younger than me. For some reason, I was wearing this shirt with a Crass symbol on it. She came over and started talking about Crass. She kept asking, "You don't mind?" And I was like, "No, please ask away." I really don't mind. It's an honor to have people approach you and ask about things. So, it's not been a problem at all. I think it's been a problem for some of the other members, but you'd have to ask them about that.

MRR: How did the transition from Crass to Conflict happen?

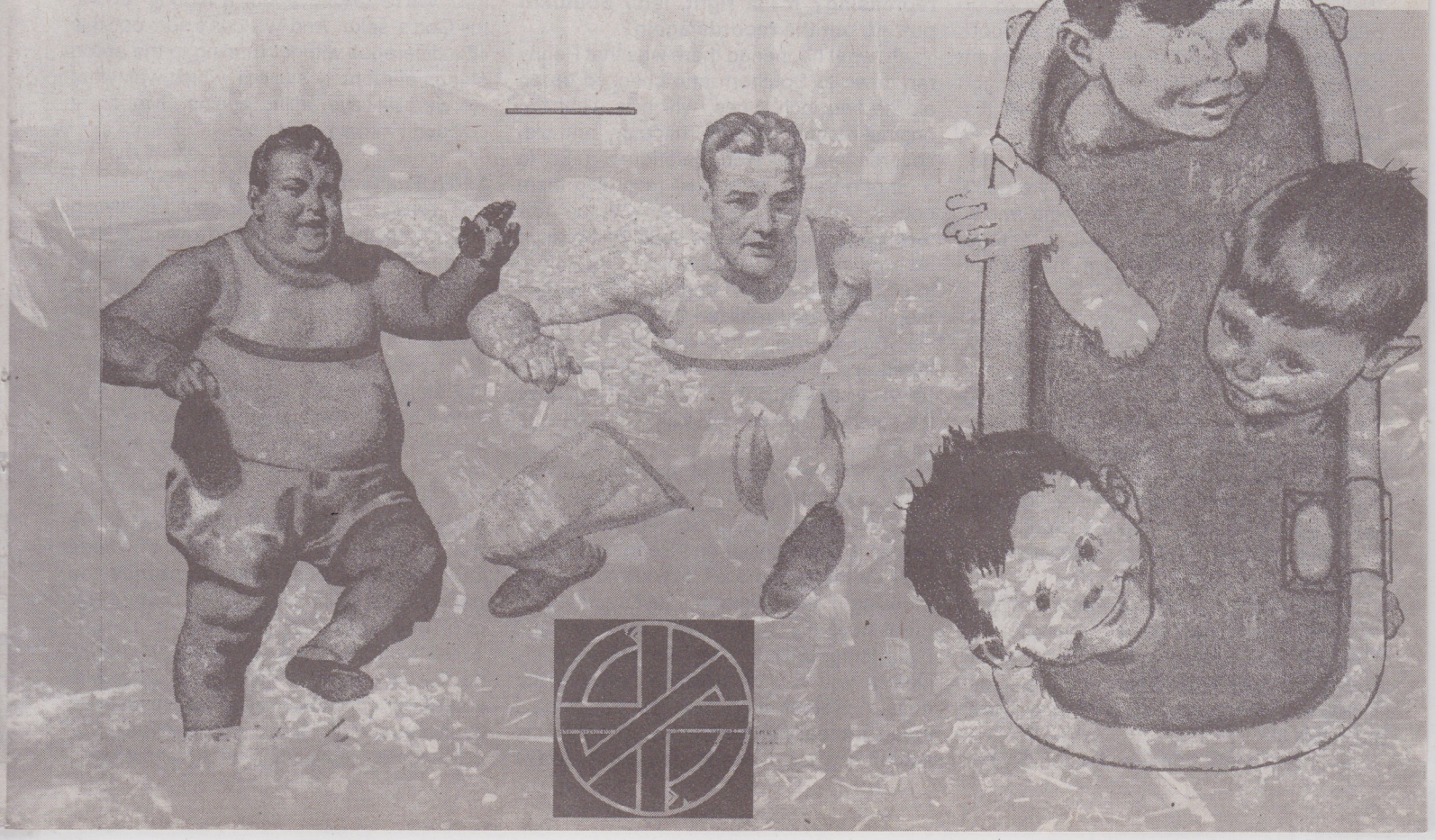
Right. Crass had finished, and it took quite a while. It took a few years. I had always been in touch with Colin and the rest of the boys. I'd been sort of getting into rap music way before it became the big hip-hop explosion. In fact, I was in New York the first time I heard scratching and I rushed back to England and was like, "I've got to find this music. I believe it's called rap." I couldn't find it anywhere. So anyway, at the time, because my art tends to be in sort of rap style anyway, I was thinking of doing a sort of rap-punk record. There was a song called "Take Your Elbows off the Table," which has never been released. It was all about the Native Americans, because I had read a book called *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*, which really struck a chord with me. It really sort of moved me. I decided that I'd do a 12" single and all of the profits would go to Native Americans in some way. I wasn't sure how I was going to do it. So, I phoned up the band, and none of Crass was interested in doing it with me. So, I phoned up Colin and said, "Look, I've got this idea for a single, Colin. Would Conflict be interested in doing the backing for it?" And he went, "Conflict had been thinking about doing a tribute to Crass and were going call it *The Gathering of the 5000*. Would you be interested in singing on it?" And I went, "Yeah, sure." So, we did that Brixton Academy gig, which ended in a full-scale riot. And then they invited me to stay on, and so I did. And Colin and I started writing songs together, which was good because we always hit it off, sparks off of each other. And that was it. I was in.

MRR: How different from being in Conflict was being Crass, in terms of everyday functioning of the band and getting along with Colin and things like that?

Well, I was always aware that, first and foremost, it was Colin's band. But, I think the differences were that...firstly, I was able to go to rehearsals and, at five. I'd say, "I have to leave now. See you next Monday," or something and it was the same with tours and things. Once I got out of the van, that was it. It was my free time. Whereas in Crass, because Crass lived in the Crass house, you could never get away from it. Because we were similar ages, there was a bit more...I don't want to say fun, but a little bit more naughtiness went on, which, for me, was a great release because I was just sort of discovering those teenage years that had been eaten up by this serious Crass bit.

MRR: So one main difference is that Conflict was Colin's band and supposedly Crass was a collective. Was that true on the ground? Would you have these really collective discussions about each song or where you were going as a band?

Yeah, we did. I mean, a sad thing happened when Crass was first recognized by the English press. Someone, I can't remember who it was now, Graham Locke, I think, who was a reporter, phoned up Pete Stennett who was running Small Wonder Records at the time, the first label that Crass was on, and said, "Who are these Crass people?" And he said, "Oh, they're a bunch of ex-hippies who live in a commune in a cottage in Essex." And from that day on, people had this idea that we were all middle class, rich little mummy and daddy's boys, walking around barefoot with headbands and lugging tee-pees in the garden and what



have you—all sleeping in beds in a dormitory with those grey blankets with a red stripe on. Totally untrue.

Then they found out that we were growing our own vegetables in the garden. Well, we had a big garden; there were a lot of us living there in the same house. It made sense to cut down on the bills to grow our own vegetables. What else were we going to do with it? We used to eat dinner at the same time because it made sense.

So, I would agree that, yes, it was a collective. But, there weren't rules and regulations. I think the only rules we had was that when you came into the house, you took your shoes off and no drugs.

We never had a thing on the wall that said, "Steve must wash up or make dinner on Tuesday." If you walked past the sink and there were dirty dishes in it, you just washed them up.

And I think that's why it worked. We'd all have a meal together. Then we'd sit down and of course someone would pipe up with something, "Wouldn't it be a good idea if..." And we'd all go, "Yes, yes." Or we'd talk about things. And that's where songs would evolve.

MRR: Since the breakup of the band, you still have the Crass products that are out there. How does that work as a collective, when there are Crass t-shirts being made and Crass records now being repressed? Are those collective decisions? How are those decisions being made?

Well, the t-shirt thing...Are you talking about bootlegs? Because there are a lot of bootlegs out there, as well. For years, I've been saying to the rest of them, "Look, we've got to do something about this bootleg stuff. It's ridiculous now."

And one of the arguments was, "No, Steve, you can't do that because we don't want to. If they're just a garage thing who is silk screening his own t-shirts in a garage somewhere and selling them to pay his rent, that's OK by us."

And I said, "That's all well and good. But eventually, that guy in his garage silk screening his t-shirts, he's not only silk screening Crass t-shirts, he's also doing Conflict, the Business, Sham 69, et cetera. And that guy who used to be in his garage is now in his own store with his 4x4 making a very nice living from it, thank you very much, just from copying your artwork."

And they said, "No, no, that's being ridiculous."

Well, then it turned out that there was a store in America that's the equivalent of Wal-Mart that was actually selling Crass t-shirts. So, I had to get on to someone to get lawyers to chase them up and say, "Look, pack this in."

So, now, what's happened, I actually sell Crass t-shirts at gigs. But, they're produced by me, paid for by me, and it's nothing to do with the rest of Crass. Now, if the rest of Crass want to make their own t-shirts of Crass, which I don't think they do, but if they did, then that would be fine. And that's the way it is at the moment.

MRR: I'm remembering that great photo, great in the sense of being ridiculous, photo of David Beckham, the sports celebrity billionaire, in that Crass t-shirt. That must have just sent your skin crawling when you saw that.

Oh absolutely, but on the other hand, I thought, "Blimey! David Beckham's wearing a Crass t-shirt." And then I looked closely and I saw it was all sequins made by Yves St. Laurent or some designer. And then me and Penn sort of talked about it on the phone and Penn said, "Yeah, well, isn't it funny because David Beckham has actually copyrighted his name." So, we were thinking of putting out a t-shirt with David Beckham on it wearing the Crass t-shirt and see what will happen with that because the Crass Symbol is copyrighted as well in a funny way. So, yeah, it's just really odd, isn't it? And then I heard that Angelina Jolie had been seen wearing a Crass t-shirt as well.

MRR: I didn't know these were all great anarchists with great musical taste.

Well yeah, Angelina Jolie, blimey. Who is she? [laughter]

MRR: What about the new releases, the repressing? If I'm right, isn't Southern putting out the records again?

Yeah, what happened there was that Penny ran down to Southern and checked up on all the two inch tapes, which is what the original recordings were made on, and discovered that they were deteriorating. So, in a bit of a panic, he started recording them onto digital, and realized that with the new technology that the sound could be tweaked up a bit and enhance it. So, he started doing that and then Gee went in and looked at the artwork and realized that the CDs that we were releasing just were very old and jaded and very boring. She'd always had a bit of a beef with the CD format because it's so small you can't get all of the artwork on it.

So, you're looking at half the artwork anyway and the writing is so small you can't read the bloody thing. So, she decided to design a new booklet and Penn decided to beef up the sound a bit. I received the test pressing of the CDs and it just sounded so great because, at last, you can hear that bass line, you can hear the vocals really clearly, you can differentiate between the guitars. Rather than being detrimental, I mean, it's really enhanced the sound. I think it sounds great. It sounds the way I always wanted it to, basically.

MRR: Right, and that was a collective decision, everyone talked it over and said this is...

No, unfortunately it wasn't. That's where all the trouble started. Because there were four of us who wanted to go ahead with it and release them and then there were three who didn't. This global, mighty row started. There was a threat of being taken to court by certain people. I won't mention names because I don't think it's fair. You can see it on the bloody Internet anyway, and it all got really ugly and stuff. To me, it was just stupid because basically the arguments were, "I don't like the sound and I don't like the art work."

OK, that's your opinion. Let's vote on it. Four want to do it, three don't. OK. Then it became more personal than that and it became, "This isn't what Crass is about." It got really, really, really horribly bitter and twisted. And that's when I sort of left the meeting table and was just, "Fuck the lot of you." I'm sorry, beg your pardon. I just thought, "To hell with the lot of you." If I get a chance to re-release them, I'll just go ahead release it. Penn felt the same, so we just done it. So, if we do get taken to court, I'll let you know and we'll have a big party...

MRR: [laughs]

...and I'll see you in prison.

I mean, how ridiculous is it that the big bad intergalactic anarchist Crass can't talk out a problem, which is a matter of opinion? We're talking about a bloody record, for God's sake. And we can't sort out this little difference without running to the apron strings of mommy system, which was what we were always railing against. I mean, it just don't make sense.

MRR: That's tragic.

Yes, really, I was in tears one day. When I'm not on tour, I'm working my local pub in the kitchen washing up dishes. Actually, I started to believe that that's what I'll do. One day, I was in there thinking about all this stuff and I was like up to my armpits in other peoples' dirty sort of crockery, and I just started crying because I thought, how pathetic and what a shame for such a great thing to come down to something so normal.

MRR: This kind of bad blood that came out around the re-releasing of these CDs, has that been lingering since the band broke up or did you come together at all and have good times?

To tell the truth, I think so. Before, we hadn't had to worry about "would I want to live with you as an individual?" because we just had been there working for, and in, Crass. Everything we did was for Crass, for the good

of the group, if you know what I mean. But at once, that was gone. We had time to really sort of look at each other and think, well, would I...if it hadn't been for the band, would I have chosen to live with you? We don't go to parties and things. And in some cases, it was, "No." So it was really weird. Well, then these bitter differences started coming up, which then brought into question, according to some people, the whole bloody thing of Crass. I think there's always been this underlying resentment going on here, which I knew nothing about during the Crass years.

I think with this new release thing, it brought it all out into the open. It brought it to an ugly head. But, it's been 30...when was it? I don't know, 25 years since Crass split? So, it's been a lot of time for this stuff to fester. Plus, memories fade. And I think maybe that's what it is, really.

It's just a great shame. I mean, it's always been a funny, sort of resentment thing going on. I remember that Pete Wright formed a band called Judas 2, and I've listened to it. Some of the lyrics there definitely had a little poke at me, which is fair enough, but he's definitely having a great poke at Penny Rimbaud. Since all this stuff came out, some of the stuff that certainly Pete has been saying, has been pretty nasty, and that's all I'll say about it, really.

MRR: So on top of that, you're now on tour, doing Crass material for the first time in 25 years. What led you to do that? And why after this time, did you want to go out and do that?

Well, backing up to, oh, 2007, I'd just moved up here to Norfolk. I thought, "I'll just almost retire now and I'll just sort of work in the garden and that's it. And maybe I'll write my memoirs or something." I haven't been up here two months and I've got a phone call from some bloke saying he wanted me to appear at a gig he was doing at Brixton. It was going to be a two-day punk festival thing. And he said, "Would you be interested in doing something?" I was like, "No, I've already done that," because I was fed up with doing the same old stuff. I just don't want to do that. Anyway, I get to sort of thinking about it, and some friends came over and they said, "Well, Steve, are you going to do it?" And I was like, "No, I don't think I will." They asked, "Well, why not?" and I said, "Oh, I'm fed up with it" and na na na. I said, "Look. The only way I'll do it, is if I can do something that's not been done before. It's got to be exciting for me." And so, then it hit me. Because I knew I had a 30 minute slot and I knew bands like Conflict, Stiff Little Fingers, the Buzzcocks were going to play. You know, the usual suspects.

I thought, "I know what I'll do. I'll perform the *Feeding of the 5000* record." Leave out "Asylum," because only Eve Libertine can do that. Leave that out, but I'll just perform, live, in its entirety, the *Feeding of the 5000*, because even Crass never did that.

I thought, "I won't announce it to anyone. I'll just go onstage and do it and blow everyone off stage." All right, this is my idea. So I phoned the bloke up and I said, "Yeah, I'll do it. How long do I get?" He asked "Well how long do you want?" I said "Oh about 30 minutes." He agreed.

He asked me, "Well, can you give me an idea of what are you going to do?" and I said "Yeah, I'm going to do *Feeding of 5000* from start to finish," and the phone went dead. I got really worried and I said, "Are you all right?" and he went, "Yeah, yeah, I'll call you back, I'll call you back." So the phone goes down, he calls me back in 40 minutes, then he goes, "Right, Steve...it's not taking place at the Academy. You're headlining two nights at Shepherd's Bush Empire. We've got all the bands lined up and everyone's really excited about it." And I went, "Right..." [chuckle] and that's where it started from.

Well, I did those two nights. There was loads of controversy about it. I got in real trouble. Everyone was screaming and shouting at me about what a bastard I was, and I'd sold out, and I was going to destroy Crass and what it stood for.

Anyway I did two nights at Shepherd's Bush that was a real success. The following week I was getting phone calls from Los Angeles and Berlin. People wanted me to go and do the *Feeding of 5000* and all this kind of thing...and I was just saying to them, "Look, I can't do it, I can't do it. I'm really sorry, but the Shepherd's Bush thing was meant to be a unique one-off experience. It cannot be repeated and I would feel a sham if I was to do that."

And then I realized how many people are out there who wanted to...couldn't make it to those gigs, obviously, but who wanted to hear the Crass material live. And I thought about it and I thought about it, and I spoke to various people and I decided, well, OK then, for one last time, I'll do it. I will do my favorites and well, anybody else's favorite, and I'll just do from '78 towards '82. I've got to let people know that this again is a one-off, that it will never be repeated. And I'll call it *Last Supper*.

Because I'll tell you now, and anyone else who's listening, that the last gigs are going to be in England in November, and I think they're going to be at Shepherd's Bush Empire again. And after I've sung "Owe Us A Living" for the last time or whatever song I finish on, that's it, I will never perform Crass songs live on the stage again. And that's it, I promise that. I am not going to be a Jimmy Pursey or a John Lydon and come back...it just isn't going to happen, that's it.

So, it's been going really well so far. It's been really emotional wherever I've been, but it seems really good and it's really heartening. All of the gigs we've done, there's just been smiling faces of people just enjoying listening to that stuff again and...I don't know. Yeah, it's nostalgia but it's a real celebration.

MRR: For the Shepherd's Bush show, did you consider reaching out to the original members of Crass to see if anyone was interested in performing with you?

I thought about it, but I decided against it because the problem has always been that the minute you put up posters that say Steve Ignorant, Eve Libertine and Penny, then people get the idea that Crass has reformed. And Crass will never, ever reform. So, that's why I steered away from it, and I don't think they would have been into it anyway.

I mean, I did ask, and they all went, "Nah, not interested." And I know actually that's a good point I have to stress, again to you and to anyone listening, that Crass

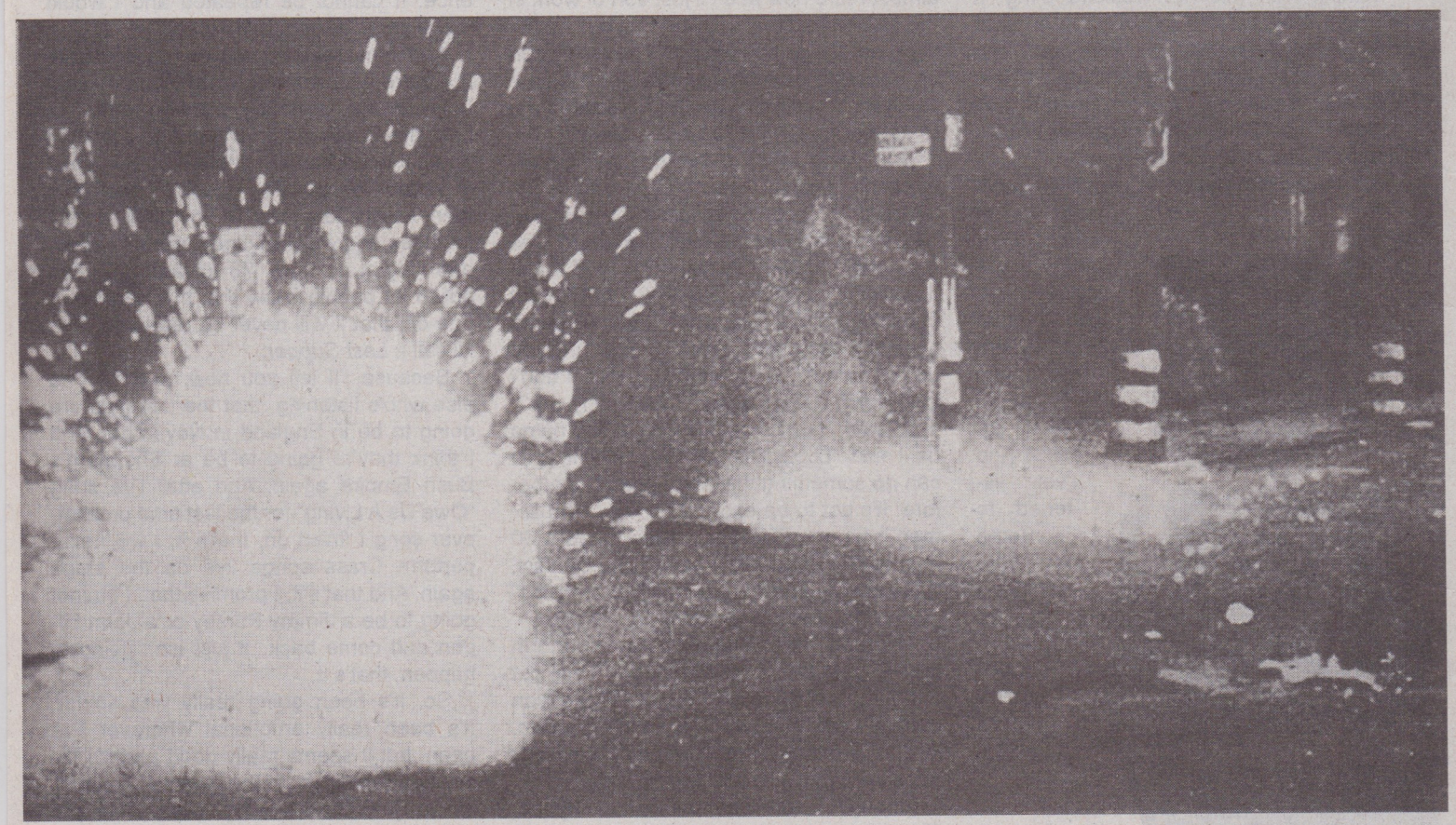
are not coming to America. It's Steve Ignorant with friends performing Crass songs.

There are a couple of people out there who I've got to speak to when I come to the States who keep putting out this thing that says "Steve Ignorant, Crass, Coming to America." If you're buying tickets for these shows because you think it's going to be Crass, go and get your money back because it's not...it's me. If you still want to come see me and my mates doing these songs, feel free, but don't expect to see Crass.

destroy myths and legends. When I first did the Shepherd's Bush Empire, one of Penn's biggest arguments was, "I don't want you to use any of my material" because he didn't like the idea of the performance being in a commercial venue. I just said to him, "Oh, that's ridiculous" because he's been performing in a jazz club in London and it was ten pounds to get in. You didn't know what you were going to get. You'd see maybe two bands and one might be playing a bit of Miles Davis or John Coltrane, but usually it would be this avant garde-y improvisation rubbish as I call it. Plus if you bought

MRR: Has the rest of Crass weighed in on the tour? Do you know whether they're supporting you, giving you their blessing?

No, I didn't really bother, because the way I see it is that the people who wrote those songs should be happy that people want to hear them, and that someone wants to perform them. In a funny way, it's almost like the Crass songs don't belong to Crass anymore. It's like every other people's music if you know what I mean. But I just want to do it for one last time; shut the door on



MRR: I've read material that expresses some concerns that your performing of Crass material is corrupting the memory of the collective. But, I also read somewhere that Penny, I think it was in August of last year, has given his blessing to the tour. Did you have a conversation with him and the rest of the band about your decision?

No. What I figured is this: There is a guy from America called Jessie Lewis and he released a CD of Crass material, of Crass songs that he had sort of put to acoustic guitar—really nice. I thought, well, how come it is OK for him to do it, but when I say I want to do it...I used to be in the bloody band. I wrote some of the songs. Aapparently I'm not allowed to sing my own material because somehow I'm destroying the myth and the legend of Crass. Well, good if I am because that's why Crass existed was to

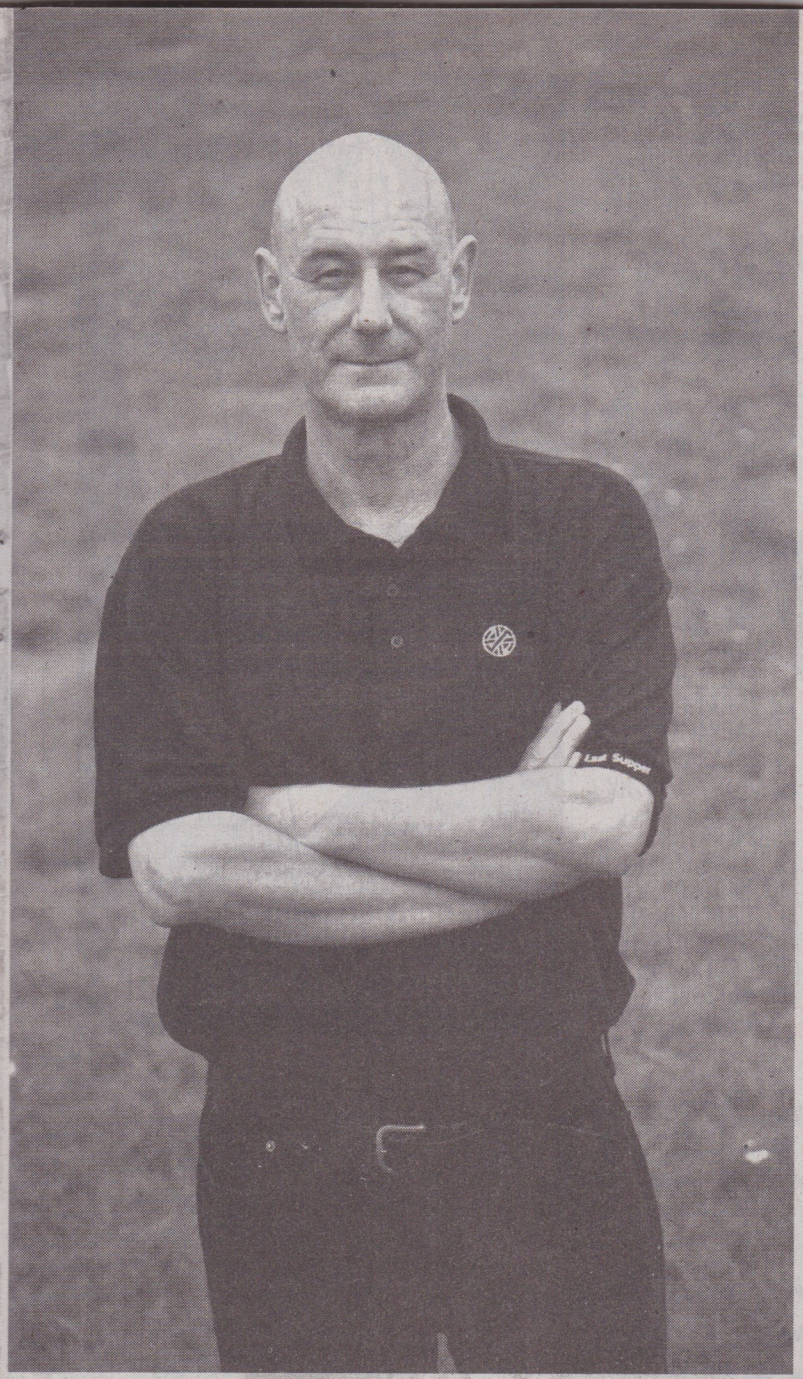
a bottle of beer, it was like three quid for a small bottle of Budweiser, fifteen quid for a bottle of wine. So which one is the commercial venue then?

When people came to Shepherd's Bush, there was like five or six bands a day. It was fifteen pounds for one day and I can't remember the exact price now, but it was a pretty good deal and beer was at pub prices, the sound was really good. The place was a lovely old music hall theatre, so it was just ridiculous. Anyway, I went ahead and did the gig anyway. Two days before I was doing it, he gave me his blessing to use his material and said, "Sorry I've been a twat." Since then me and him are always seeing each other and we have spoken about it and he still doesn't really agree. It's not the sort of thing that he would do, but he understands why I'm doing it. So, he's cool, it's really good.

it for me. Honestly I don't really care what the other members think because I want to do it anyway and I think I don't have to justify why I'm doing it. I think, if they were to come along to a concert, talk to some of the people there, hear what they said about it and why they so love hearing it or wanted to come along to the concert, then I think they'd understand as well. Besides, I can do what I want; I am an anarchist.

MRR: It's been 25 years since you've been performing this material and it's a different world in many ways. What's it like 25 years later being on stage playing this material? How are you different?

Well, I'm not ducking and diving bottles and ashtrays anymore, which is really nice. So far, in a funny way it's almost like the music and the performance take second place to these people having a reason for being in



the same place at the same time and meeting old friends that they haven't seen for a number of years. And when I'm up on stage, it's almost like the songs have got even more meaning for me now. Now that I'm 53 years old and a bit more grumpy, I can sort of understand it a bit better. When I go on stage, all I do is to try and give the best performance that I possibly can. Because those people deserve it, you know? I don't know, I'm surprised I still do it tell the truth.

MRR: We're getting up there, right? We're not "angry young men," we're "angry old men" now. How have your politics changed?
They haven't really. I think I still, in my own little way, try and live my life according to Crass-ism. I mean, I've got some changed opinions, but my politics…I had a blazing argument in the pub the other night with some bloke who was being a bit racist about immigrants and all this kind of thing. So, the bullshit is still there that you've got to deal with. It never stops, does it? The only thing now is, I won't back down. And actually I'm a little bit bigger now, so…[laughs]

MRR: That helps. I'm kind of curious, because I know when Crass was on tour, I understood you guys would come back just absolutely broke, because you'd just be putting money back into what you were doing. Is that true now? I mean, I guess the question really is—how lucrative is this tour for you?

I don't think I can earn a living from it. But, I'm 53 now, as I've said. All the band members are mid-thirties up to late-forties. We're too old to be sleeping on people's floors and partying all night. We just can't do it. The most important thing for us is that we get the job done and we do it as well as possible. I wanted this whole experience to be fun with a capital F, apart from being hard work. So, I make sure that there has to be a comfortable bed for people to sleep in. There's got to be decent food and all that kind of thing. The PA has to be really spot on.

So, it's different in that way. Because, that DIY thing that Crass used to do, was fine when I was 20, in my twenties, or even in my thirties. But, I don't really like to do that anymore.

I remember playing in Maryland, with the Stratford Mercenaries. We had to drive through a snowstorm for five hours, and we got to the venue and there was a really tiny PA, only half of which was working. And I said, "Well, I'm not prepared to do the gig." And the guy said, "Why not?" And I said, "Because there's only half the PA working so we've got to give people half their money back because they're only going to be hearing half of it." And he couldn't understand it. And I said, "Look mate, some people are coming to see this for the first time. And if it's a rubbish sound, people are going to think that's what I do, that it just sounds amateur and it's wasn't worth the money." If people are prepared to pay, and make an effort to come see your concert, the least you can do is present it well.

So that's what I want to do this time. I'm not saying that the DIY scene can't accommodate that. I've got a lot of friends and I've got a lot of time for the DIY thing, but for this time around, for the last time, I wanted to make sure that the other members of the band were catered for, that's the most important thing for me.

MRR: Well, what else can we expect in the future from you?
Well, I'm going to finish this in November. That's the "Steve Ignorant does Crass" thing—gone forever—and then I'll take time off. What I'm planning to do in the future is to do like a spoken word thing. But, not like Henry Rollins does, be more like Jello Biafra. Basically, it'll be me on stage I'm hoping, with some small props. So, it's almost like looking at a theater set, with lighting and your visuals. I'm thinking of having a little, small, three-piece band there. It'll be me talking about me, things I've done. Then I'm holding slightly after a question and answer thing. So it really would be like a bastardized version of *An Evening With…* and just see how that goes. But, I'm quite excited about it.

MRR: I have to ask this last question because I can't pass up this opportunity, but Steve Ignorant, do they still owe us a living?
Of course they fucking do.

Does she…or doesn't sh

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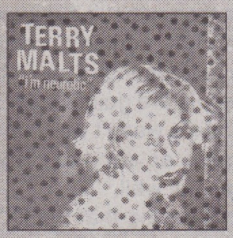

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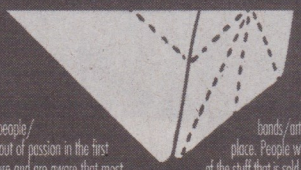

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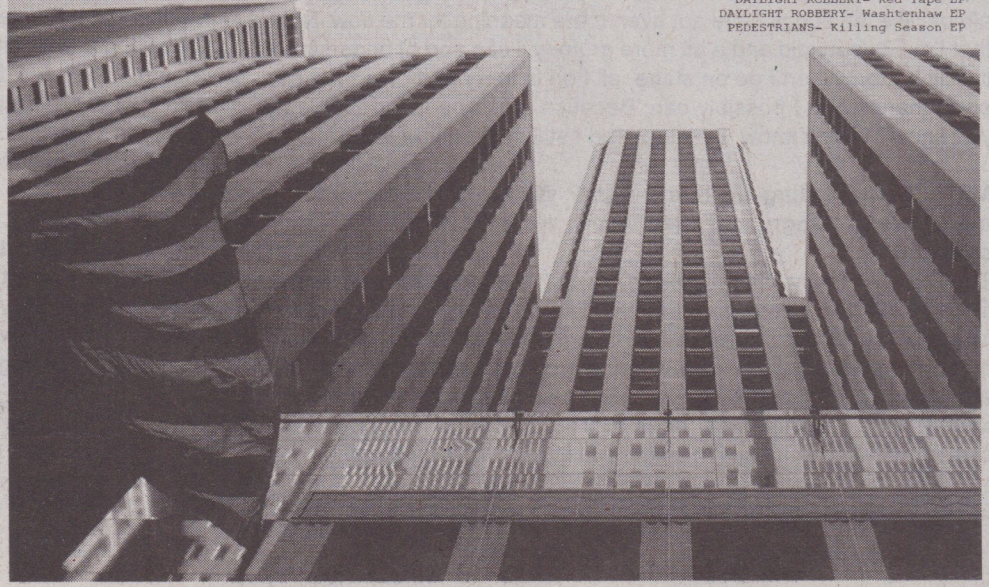

DO THEY OWE US A LIVING? PAY NO MORE THAN £2.25?

By Ariel awesome//It began as a hushed murmur, a kind of ringing buzz that grew louder by the day. "Crass is coming, Crass is coming." I was unsettled by it, worried.

Reunion shows are a complicated thing, mired in nostalgia, a kind of historical reenactment. I've always played the sour skeptic. If any band were to test that resolve it would be this one, whose songs I know arguably better than those of my own band. The songs that helped shape my idea of the intersection of art and politics. The punk I have come to measure all punk against. How could I not be tempted? Well, I'm just not. I missed Crass, and it's likely so did you. That isn't something that bothers me, but rather defines the time in which I have been a punk.

I was relieved to find it was not Crass, but then what was it? What was coming?

Steve Ignorant will be the first one to tell you what this is not. This is not Crass. Crass will never reunite, he says. Instead he likens it to a cover band, and with a little research I can confirm that he's right. That is just what it is. It is him and some buddies from other bands he's played with before, no one else from Crass. So why are so many people insisting on calling it Crass, believing it's Crass? We could blame this on greedy promoter's flyers, but I don't think that's it. We are a nation of branding, of nicknames, catchphrases. "Steve Ignorant's The Last Supper" has no chance against the single seductive syllable of "Crass." We want it to be Crass, so it has become Crass. If Steve thought he had say-so over the response of the world to his artistic endeavors, then here is his wake up call. You may put it into the world, but we are the meaning makers, we are the interpreters, the culturalizers. Your fans have decided it is Crass, so Crass it is, in a way.

The branding was just too good to resist I suppose. The Crass symbol is just as beloved as any of their songs, maybe more. Thought of a giant Crass symbol floating regally above the stage might have as much of a draw as Steve himself.

The statement I've heard again and again from friends going to see the show when I've voiced my discomfort is "but Penny gave his blessing, so its not sketchy." My annoyed response to which is usually, "that's fine, then Penny can go watch it," because personally I think its weird, and kind of, well, sketchy.

Imagine it were your band. Imagine you were watching someone you wrote songs with, someone you toured with having auditions to find a suitable person to play you in their little stage adaptation of your songs. How in the world is that not creepy?

Steve's "I can do what I want" response to criticism makes him sound like a petulant child. As an individual Steve can, in fact, do whatever he wants but that doesn't mean it is good or right. Since when does his free will also give him ethical free reign?

Steve Ignorant's The Last Supper is a subversion of Crass's legacy entirely built on the cult of personality. It is one person succumbing to the lure of an adoring public, abandoning their DIY ethos, putting fun and desire and escapism in front of the more important thing that was the greater message of what Crass was, how it was.

Punk history is important, but not living in the past. Resources and attention are better spent on what is here, what is now, not a shadow of what was. We need the message of Crass, what they said, and what they were. We need it for inspiration, not to make us forget, not an escape from the very real struggles we are facing.

Corporate power is flexing its political muscles to attack workers, silence independent and public news sources, and ensure that the pockets of the wealthy elite will come before that of the welfare and will of the people. This is happening now. In the courts, in the streets. So forgive me if right now I'm not feeling ok with walking up to a random venture capitalist and handing them $20.* Ethical quandaries such as this are being ignored for the sake of what is easiest, what is most comfortable. No matter what something has meant, no matter what it was, it can be reduced to a commodity like anything else.

The legacy of Crass is based just as much, if not more, on how they operated as a band as the songs. They maintained a determined independence when everyone else was cashing in, they used consensus

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"But this ain't for revolution,
it's just for cash."

Who do you think they are fooling?

ANARCHO-PUNK IS DEAD

"Is there something I can learn?
Do I need a business man to promote my angle?
Can I resist the carrots that fame and fortune dangle?
I see the velvet zippies in their bondage gear,
The social elite with safety-pins in their ear,
I watch and understand that it don't mean a thing."

By 1978 Punk was dead then CRASS came along and gave it a new lease of life/gave it meaning/inspired us to do things on our own/to-believe in our own power/to squat/to protest/to fight back/to say fuck off to the pathetic punk pseuds who posed but didn't practice/ CRASS didn't play the game/they played their own games/ CRASS played alternative venues/used alternative media/put pay no more than prices on records/ CRASS tried to be as anti-capitalist as they could and not be part of the spectacle/ That is why they inspired a generation, it wasn't their music but their attitude and actions that made them different, made them significant/ what this farce in Shepherds Bush says to us is -we don't care anymore, what CRASS stood for is no longer relevant, now punk is just a puppet show for business men to profit from/for young punks to mistake this show as the real deal when it is in reality just a whitewash/ the shame is that just one member of CRASS can fuck up the reputation and respect that the band earnt and kept by his greed/ shame on Steve and the rest of the performers playing out their roles as lackeys of the music business strumming their cocks/ don't really care if they make any money from this event/Steve gets the same considerable royalties that all CRASS members still do/what hurts is the betrayal/the renouncing of an ethic/DIY or EMI?/ well we know where CHUMBAWONGA went/ If our music entertains but does not make us super rich it has failed/now Steve and chums take the CRASS name and dirty it in the filth of a festival of forgetting what mattered/Promoting what? Just the promoters bank balance and a sense of nihilism?/ just wanna play my guitar, what does it matter, it's not important/ maybe not to those who've given up/those who don't care/those who just want a beer and a good nite out/maybe pick up some skirt too eh?/but it matters to those who still care/those who still kick against the pricks/and it matters that an ideal can be degraded by the weight of hypocrisy coming from those that hold the microphones/ it matters that there are still many bands, labels, organisations, squats, co-ops, activists trying to do something worthwhile/still trying to fight back without being compromised into irrelevance by the capitalist machine/ People who work and play for their beliefs and ideals and not just to see their names in lights or in the papers or to pocket a few extra quid/DIY NOT EMI- remember that mantra?/NOT EMI meant not doing things with or as capitalists do/ Bands promoters and labels that copy the business parasites are no more DIY than Madonna or Billy Graham/Life is a continuous run of compromises our ethics determine where we draw the line/ Pretending to be CRASS, playing at the Empire is a step way over the line/Anyone who thinks this gig is cool either never understood the significance of CRASS or just doesn't care anymore.
Jon @ctive

"Yes that's right, punk is dead
It's just another cheap product for the consumers head
Bubblegum rock on plastic transistors
Schoolboy sedition backed by big time promoters
CBS promote the Clash
Ain't for revolution, it's just for cash
Punk became a fashion just like hippy used to be
Ain't got a thing to do with you or me"

Can't be bothered to do another leaflet for the latest Steve Ig/Crass "cash in" besides it seems that CRASS has finally lost it as avalid or vital force and descended into bickering and infighting using lawyers and money grabbers, very sad.
jon @ctive

DO THEY OWE US A LIVING? PAY NO MORE THAN £2.25?

WHAT VISION IS LEFT? PAY NO MORE THAN £2.25 STATIONS OF THE CRASS

process (where every member had veto power), and they dedicated effort to being more than just a band by pouring energy into other projects. How they were a band is just as much a part of our idea of them as any of their albums. The descriptions I've read of their performances with a 40 watt bulb, a low stage, self made merch and aesthetic accompaniments; these things say a lot about the possibility of working outside of the system, about self determination, and rejecting the rock star musician mythology. The forms they worked in, the way they were a band, is more inspiring to me than any of their songs. Someone going to see this tour will get a big bright theatrically lit stage, pro-sound, security guards, stage barriers, ticket broker charges, and a slick multimedia show. The content of the songs is dwarfed by such a counter message.

So, when the medium is the message what exactly is Steve Ignorant saying about Crass? What is he saying about punk? What is he saying about the audience?

Punk will be dead when all we have left is nostalgia, when the way we interact with each other (personally and musically) means nothing. When we buy a ticket, and get in line. It is important, now more than ever, that we stay independent, that we build up our community and reject corporate money. We can't act as capitalists or businessmen and expect any other result than that of becoming what we hate. We can't afford to shrug our shoulders like it's not a big deal, because it is.

What I'd rather see that this Last Supper Club Karaoke session: new works by Steve Ignorant. New songs, new performances, new ideas. That's what I want to see. Penny, come back with more of your saxophone poetry, Gee give us more art… Pete, Eve, Joy, Phil, Andy? Where are you guys? What are you making? What are you doing now?

In this way the legend that has built up around what Crass was could be broken down, and the almost worshipful attitudes punks have developed toward the band could be combated. It is unhealthy to have such an untouchable icon. Here, at very least, I think Steve and I agree. But, If you want to demystify the monolithic untouchable legacy of Crass, show us who you are now, where your creative paths have lead you. That is the best celebration of those songs I can think of, not playing them.

***

*Yes, the owner of Slim's (the site of the San Francisco show) is a founding member of the big silicon valley venture capital firm Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers. Lots of Internet mega companies and biotech (read: animal testing). Nothing that reeks of classic corporate evil per say, but definitely a wheel that keeps the capitalist shit system grinding on.

BY THE PUNKS ON THE BUS

The upcoming "Crass The Last Supper" show featuring Steve Ignorant deserves protest if not an all out boycott. The politically charged ideas put forth by a band like Crass should be presented in a space run by punks, and not by capitalists hostile to those ideas. It is impossible to ignore the enormity of the door price-$21 is no fucking around. Having it so high raises questions about the evening's show. Steve Ignorant has toured DIY venues before with his Stratford Mercenaries, his absence in these spaces may signify the failures and limits of those spaces. But it is time we rip the DIY brand name from the commercial culture vultures and bring it back to practice in our daily lives. The lack of any original member besides Steve performing "Songs of Crass '77 to '84" is disappointing. He claims that this isn't being billed as Crass by him, but by the clubs, then the retort is that it leaves little to the imagination of what will be presented will be a replica. But this is a special engagement we are told; in fact it's the last time these songs will be aired in this manner thereby increasing their worth. And hell the message of Crass is still relevant today and so many people want to see him play the songs that mean so much to them. Also, Steve is a vital part in creating the popular Crass slogans like "There's No Authority except yourself" and you can't argue with that.

A night of Crass will guarantee to sellout. This begs the question that the tour may be more about business than rallying the troops to fight global capitalism. Many people are drawn to Crass for their daring stand they made in being principled and intelligent when the burgeoning punk scene seemed to be otherwise. If people are outraged by another reunion show it just may be that they are again being asked to cheapen

the ideas and principles they affirmed with punk. A protest of the show then will seek to gather like minds who are attracted to the power and passion of punk, but are not willing to get it mediated by promoters, night club owners, bouncers etc. Basically all of the people who are alien to the spirit of DIY, which includes the practice of keeping our shows at cost so that impoverished people can have access to the night as well as the people with money to throw away. The door price becomes a sticking point because it supports this wrong-headed-trend to make culture expensive. That poor people should be deprived of it or suffer for it.

A show and rally outside the Steve Ignorant show will affirm the efforts of a few committed people to create change at the same time steal for ourselves a night of rage. Surely there are more issues and atrocities in the world today worthy of our attention and Steve Ignorant just may have a good outlook on them. With the expansion of capitalism and its after effect of creating meltdowns across communities worldwide coupled with the pernicious growth of the police state and war culture the world could use a band with the stature of Crass, if not their songs amplified for one night. The enemies of punk and anarchism, be it the state or white supremacists, would like nothing better than to see infighting steal the energy away from unified action challenging their programs. The night to amass Crass fans will be an impressive show of strength. It will speak in action louder than words that people can and do resist capitalism's promise of "Slavery or Death." So the intent of the protest is simply to announce "Bullshit" outside the doors of the carnival show and leave it at that.

And sure, Steve Ignorant shouldn't be denied access to strengthening his network of allies in ways that are accessible to him. The $21 rally he's holding might be more conceived by him as a sort of protest against the forces of banality, of old age, of a shrinking network of friends. which promises the night will end in some positive results. Given this light maybe the extra service charge is forgivable. People will go home warm with a glow that will radiate with them through the workweek. What they won't realize is that they will have feed a place that is the antithesis of "anarchy and freedom." When the tunes from their night with the overpriced-jukebox fade they will not be anymore closer to underground punk scene that needs their input in creating a free world. To be fair this is not the first time the Bay Area has seen a high door price at a lame club, selling us a familiar band, featuring an "Original Member," and promising a night of "Golden Oldies.". The Bay Area is a major target on the Rock circuit, which is rich with every niche market that has the potential for snatching a bit of the Filthy Lucre. It is such countless evenings wasted sitting through awful opening acts that reveal the false promise of reliving the past.

While it may have once been easy to passively ignore or laugh at the likes of Germs without Darby or Dead Kennedys without Jello, at a certain point conditions beg for people to actively resist a cheapening of the values of a people of conscience. People did just that in Pensacola Florida when Dead Kennedys were knee deep in controversy. The band just had a grueling legal battle partially over using "Holiday in Cambodia" in a clothing commercial, and then were touring without Jello. The punks there weren't cool with the smell floating into town and they got together (only a dozen really) and made their own stink outside the show. They made enough of an impression to get the attention of guitarist East Bay Ray outside and in a discussion. If you want to call it that-he left the earnest young punks with such gems as, "Do you know who I am...I'm East Bay Ray... I was Punk before you were born!!!" Yeah. Sure, he's right about that, but I think he misses the point. If part of one's reputation is founded on espousing a dissent to power, then that person should be willing to hear it when their power is being checked. The hired guns presenting the plastic hits are not the people who struggled to make the Crass ideas flesh.

Even with Steve Ignorant, the "Last Supper" band has a reputation more in common with the parasites who steal the band's image in places like Rock T-shirt emporiums that fester in shopping malls (isn't of interest then that the Crass merchandise is exclusively licensed through Machete the side company of Rancid. Their company also has the exclusive merchandise rights for the Sex Pistols and Agnostic Front). It would take considerable more courage and imagination for Steve Ignorant to put together a band and tour with unknown material and new ideas that he has made with his current collaborators. The protest outside the Last Supper show tempts us all to the edge of danger that is lacking in going the cover band route. If Steve wants to we will leave some microphone time on our unlicensed stage for him to play his songs that may be unappreciated by people only willing to pay for something familiar. We can even pass a hat after the show and he can get 30% of what people throw in it. In closing, what we would really like to ask Steve is what he thinks his former self thirty years ago would think about what he is doing today? He would snarl, "The Last Supper Sux!"

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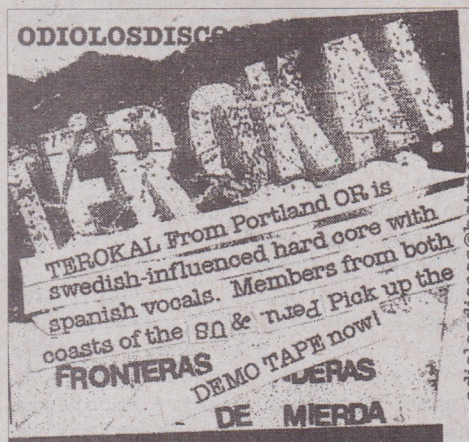

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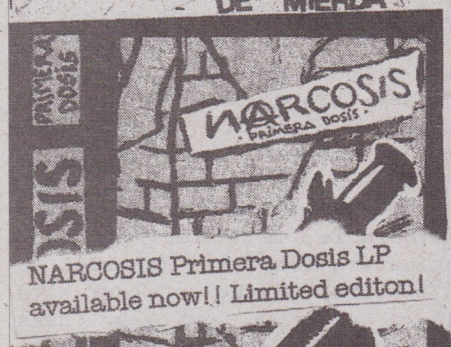

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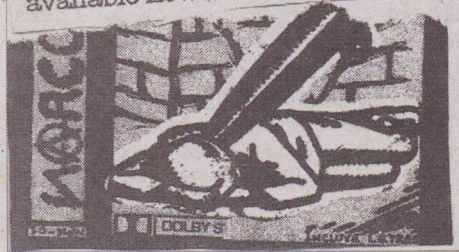

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Interview with Dave Scott, drummer of

ADRENALIN O.D.

Punk rock has always featured wise-asses, but few early hardcore bands featured both trenchant sarcasm and nimble, speed-drenched musicality like Adrenalin OD. Stuffed full of suburban angst and pop culture wit, they took aim at White Castle and Masterpiece Theatre; Godzilla, the Pope, and Elvis; and gas stations, pizza, and bulimia. They offered hardcore for the bored and smarmy, the fearless kids who dared to joke in the moshy sweat-piles of CBGB's. When they weren't burning their own paths, they looked back and hijacked songs by Kiss, Sex Pistols, Queen, and Bay City Rollers, all tendered in their trademark style.

By David Ensminger

MRR: Let's start early on. From what I know, your half-sister dated Mick Jones from the Clash. So punk rock was almost family values for you, it seems. What were those 1979 shows like for you?
Getting to see the Clash up close was amazing. My earliest memories go back to the mid- 1970s when she was friends with Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd before she got into punk. She was always pretty out there and fearless. She turned me on to some great music early on like the great Miami bands where she grew up, like the Reactions, the Eat, and the Cichlids.

MRR: Looking back were the Clash just another set of rock stars, or somehow different?
I'll be honest, and some of my friends are gonna laugh when they remember this... but after *Sandinista* came out, many of the fans of the early Clash felt let down. Myself and a bunch of my friends from the early New Jersey hardcore band No Democracy decided to go to Rockefeller Center where they shoot *Saturday Night Live.* We were bored and always up for fun and decided we would heckle the celebrities as they came out into the lobby after the show. Ron Howard was the host, and the musical guest was the Clash. First out was Anson Williams, who played Potsie. We kept calling him Nazi. Then came the Van Patton kid from the *Karate Kid* movie. We were busting his balls so bad that he wanted to fight us, and then pissed him off further by making the *Karate Kid* stance on one leg as security cooled him down and threw us out. This was perfect timing because out of the door minutes later came the Clash. They were really acting like rock stars then. They had the posse and the beatbox and the girls, especially Mick. My friends then followed them down the streets of New York City singing the Kraut song "Sell Out" as loud as possible. I felt bad cause they were such a great band. I'm sure they started off different.

MRR: I know you are a big power pop fan, you even met Pezband while admitting to *Flipside* that Cheap Trick was a favorite band (Tony from the Adolescents shares the same heroes). As a teenage music enthusiastic, did you see two worlds colliding, or merging, in punk and pop?
Our biggest influence was the Dickies, so that always seemed natural. Some of my favorite bands like Nasty Facts, the Speedies, Shrapnel and the Colors were all happy marriages of punk and pop. Buzzcocks and Rezillos as well.

MRR: By fifteen, you met the East Paterson Boys Choir, basically the future AOD roster, became their "manager," and later even their drummer at times. At the time, they were a cover band?
Mostly covers except for some originals like "American Progress" (covered by Mourning Noise with pre-Samhain Steve Zing), "Gutter Fun," "Susie Stretchmarks." The covers would range from "Saturday Night" (Bay City Rollers), "Sonic Reducer" (Dead Boys), "Pills" and "Chatterbox" (New York Dolls) and even the Sergio Valente jeans commercial theme.

MRR: Dave from MDC once told me they felt connected to the late '70s punk scene, due to their age. You were all young, but rooted in that era (the choice of covers proves). Did that make you musically different than later hardcore "crew" bands?

Even though we all were into early punk before hardcore started, Adrenalin O.D. set out to be a hardcore punk band. We really felt connected to the energy and the youth. Plus, it was something we could be a part of from the beginning. Much like the first generation of punk bands. For most of the kids back then, once they saw the movie *Decline of Western Civilization* documenting the LA hardcore scene, they were hooked.

MRR: "Speed" and "humor" seem to be the way people recall the band. Was the band's self-styled, spontaneous humor a way of nodding to the Dickies and others, plus a reaction to the grim seriousness of fellow punks?
There were so many serious bands back then that people forgot how tongue and cheek the original punk movement was. How many times could you say "Fuck Reagan"? We actually started off with political songs until we realized that the best stories are from experience. The band got it's voice I think when Paul wrote the song "Suburbia" from the *Let's BBQ* EP. It really put to music how we felt growing up. Most people from New Jersey have a wise-ass sense of humor. It's in our DNA. We were always funny people influenced by funny things, and it made the band unique for it's time. We amused ourselves in pushing the boundaries of what people thought was punk. At our show at Danceteria in NYC, we came out in nun costumes. Halfway through the set, I did a drum solo while the band changed into prom dresses.

It's pretty amusing to see people moshing to a bunch of ugly dudes in prom dresses. I remember after the show walking past the singer and guitarist for Iron Maiden, and they gave me a look of disgust, like I walked into church with my dick out. That alone was priceless.

MRR: For me, like the Ramones, AOD is also a pop culture crucible – a real melting pot of TV and monster movie spoofs, White Castle sarcasm, etc. Some say the Ramones honestly loved their cretin subject matter. Did AOD?
Absolutely!!! We watched way too much TV growing up. We were raised on *The Uncle Floyd Show*, Creature Feature horror Sundays, the "acidellic" world of Sid and Marty Kroft, and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. We were much more about the B- movies than the blockbusters. We even watched Satan's Cheerleaders in a motel room with Chuck Biscuits and the Circle Jerks.

One band that was another influence when it came to attitude and humor and junk culture were the Dictators, who I always felt should have been as big as the Ramones. As for horror movies, we shared that love with fellow Jerseyites the Misfits. We were all really big Misfits fans. I would go to Glenn Danzig's mom's house after school and help him screen shirts. He would give me whole boxes of brand new Misfits 45s to sell in my high school for $5.00 each. How much do you think a box of fifty mint condition "Where Eagles Dare" 45's would go for now? I could have bought my dog braces with that money (I don't have kids and the dog has an overbite).

MRR: By 1982, "speed" was an all-consuming style, even for older punk bands, like the Dead Kennedy's and DOA. Writers often assume this was a rejection of punk rock's growing artiness or leftover street/Oi punk style. Some even suggest it was just a result of speed—manic music for manic drug-takers. What was your attraction to speed?
Personally, as a youth I was hyper, and a bad insomniac. I really found an outlet in bands like SOA, Bad Brains and Circle Jerks. The faster the better. Even the first generation of New York Hardcore was way to slow for us. We wanted to form the fastest band ever. I was straight edge in those days and had great amounts of energy and chutzpah.

MRR: How did the band end up on the *New York Thrash* compilation since you're from New Jersey? Did you feel part of the community on that comp?
We owe that to Tim Sommers and Jack Rabid who put on the popular hardcore radio show "Noise The Show" on WNYU. They were very supportive to us from the very beginning. We would mail them demos of our rehearsals, and they would play them on the show. Back in the day, if you lived in the tri-state area (NY, NJ, and Connect.) and were into punk, you listened to that show religiously. When we played our first show at a battle of the bands at my high school in Clifton, New Jersey, they announced the show on the air, and there were a lot of people in New Jersey that came to that show. For many, it was the first time they ever were at a hardcore punk show. Two songs from the rehearsal demos we sent Noise The Show were selected for the comp. We were lucky. The first thing we ever were involved in sold thousands and thousands of copies, thanks to the Bad Brains and Beastie Boys.

MRR: How mixed was the early hardcore scene in the NY/NJ area? Generally, we think that hardcore music tended to exclude women, or that First Wave punk was more multi-cultural.
The early NY/NJ scene had a small amount of women, but the women were a vital part of the scene. Many wrote fanzines like *Assassin Of Youth*, *Guillotine*, and *Life Styles of the Poor and Homeless*. Some were in bands like Sand In The Face, Killer Instinct, and No Thanks. Some of the coolest girls in the country were the hardcore faithful at the Sunday matinees at CBGB's. They were funny and could beat your ass. There were also mixed races and cultures. I don't think that was a very big issue since NY was such a melting pot.

MRR: During the *Let's Barbeque* era, were you beginning to write for *MRR*? I know you were friends with editor Tim. I believe Mykel Board called him both the Pol Pot and Johnny Appleseed of punk. How would you describe him?

Tim was originally a Jersey boy, which is why we all hit it off so well. Tim had the greatest record collection in the world, which he would ruin by putting green duct tape on the edges of every cover. Tim would play music really loud and play air guitar non-stop. Tim laughed at all my dumb jokes, and I miss him. Our conversations were rarely about politics. He even let me talk him into interviewing Agnostic Front for *MRR* because I knew their warm, cuddly side. When we would play the San Francisco Bay area, we would stay at the *MRR* house for weeks and never leave the couch. Tim's only stipulation was that he had to watch *Perry Mason* when it came on. We even threw a birthday party for our roadie Frank Grecco from Bedlam and invited Battalion Of Saints, Jello, and half of Berkley, and Tim just rolled with it.

MRR: How did you see the role of *Maximum Rocknroll* at that time? Was it a counterpoint to Flipside -- more hardcore, international, and political?
It was all of the above. *Flipside* started out of the early LA punk scene and was more of a fun music magazine. *MRR* was an extension of Tim's writings with the New Jersey Yippie newspaper *All You Can Eat*. I think that was a big influence on Tim's merging of politics and music. Plus, there was a huge movement worldwide, and *MRR* gave everyone a platform.

MRR: Did AOD feel a bit like outsiders? For instance, you once said "We would get … shit for being from suburban New Jersey."
Only in the very beginning when we would play the New York City shows. I remember our old guitarist Jim Foster jumping off the stage of CBGB's to fight with Jimmy from Murphy's Law, who was giving him shit. It's like what they say about prison: people want to test you and see if you're a pussy. Punch a bully in the nose, and they'll at least respect you. Our defining moment, and the very last time anyone would mock us, was the New York Thrash show at Irving Plaza. The entire state of New Jersey came out for that show, and it was massive fun. We earned a lot of respect from the really hardcore New Yorkers that night. By the way, for the record, I love Jimmy from Murphy's Law. He's one of my favorite people.

MRR: In one zine interview, someone mentioned that one iconic NYC hardcore band wanted to chop AOD's heads off with a lawnmower. Was there really that kind of tension with some bands?
For me, that kind of macho douchebaggery is what ruined the NY scene for good. The jocks that we hated in school had found a new way to beat people up. Shave your head and go to CBGB's and hurt people. Anyone that knows music can tell the difference between Reagan Youth and a band like Biohazard. I'll take Reagan Youth any day.

MRR: Tell me about Buy Our Records, which I know passed from the band's control over to Bedlam and others. Did you guys think of it as a serious business or simply a way to release material quickly and get the band on the road?
We never took anything seriously. It was a way to get our records out and invest that money into releasing more New Jersey bands. As the label grew and AOD got busy with touring our friends took it over. We still had a say in what bands to put out, but we were recording and playing a lot back then.

MRR: Knowing that Buy Our Records was trying to document New Jersey, and not just hardcore bands as well, did you imagine it as a kind of Dischord, localized, or more like SST, who featured a variety of styles?
Originally, we just wanted to release children's records, but members of AOD cursed too much. We never set out to have a label. We just needed to put our record out, and Paul came up with the name Buy Our Records. We were able to sell out of *Let's BBQ*, so quickly that we were able to get the *Bedlam* LP and *Mental Decay* EP out soon after. Things just kind of snowballed. AOD got busy, and our friends took over operations. We would have a say in who got signed, and we would be able to pick a band here and there, like Flag Of Democracy and X-Men. Lenny Sblendorio from Buy Our Records had eclectic taste and was responsible for some of our best bands, like Raging Slab, Pussy Galore, and The Skulls. He was responsible for weeding through the hundreds of demos. Most people don't know this, but Buy Our Records was about to put out the first White Zombie record, and at the last minute Caroline gave them a better deal.

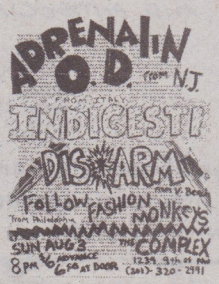
MRR: Bruce argued: "The first wave of hardcore was essentially killed off by metalheads and straight edge jocks in 1986. Not relating to either type was what got us into punk rock to begin with!" Yet, you guys were still in your prime, making really nimble hardcore. Did your crowds begin to change?
Definitely yes. We were getting more metal crossover kids at our shows, which was cool. When we started writing more melodic songs, we would get "Play faster" yelled at us a lot. People never got the inside joke of AOD, which was "be different from the expected." Punk wasn't about playing by rules, and yet there were so many out there: how to dress, how to act. We would raid the Salvation Army drop boxes before our CBGB's matinees and wear the most ridiculous thing we could find just to take the piss and vinegar out of the crowd and remind them it's about having fun.

MRR: I think you said, "We're kinda four individual bands." Can you describe the songwriting process, or the personal dynamics of the band? Was AOD pulled in separate directions?
Paul wrote most of the songs. Jack and me wrote the magna opus "Bugs." Bruce wrote much of the songs on *Cruising With Elvis*, and some on Ishtar, and Jim Foster wrote "More Beer," the worst AOD song ever. Paul, actually, was a great lyric writer, and knew how to transfer sarcasm to song quite well.

MRR: NOFX's second show ever was opening for AOD, and you've described them as having the right spirit and attitude, something AOD might have evolved into. Yet, Mike and even the band has also become much more political. Would AOD have done that?
I think in our old age we've become a lot more political personally. How can you not? The country is screwed thanks to Washington DC being turned into a business for the elite. What happened to the rebellion of the early punks or even the hippies? Everyone is so apathetic it's depressing. Would we have a song about politics if we were still together? Probably... especially since you can rhyme Van Halen and Sarah Palin.

MRR: As an early straight-edge kid, what do you think of the mid-late '80s version of the growing scene, like Bold and others? Did it become a caricature?
It did become a stereotype, but it was a youth driven movement, and the older you get, the sillier it seemed. In retrospect, it was a positive message to young kids. Ray Cappo was like the McGruff or the Smokey the Bear of Straight Edge. Can you imagine the first time these kids finally got laid and smoked pot? They probably burned their Minor Threat records. "Curse you Kevin Seconds!!!!"

MRR: Ever since AOD disbanded, you have continued as a drummer, and still work with bands as well. Why haven't you burned out?
I burned out years ago, and then I found out about cloning. To be honest, I think that the people who were really involved in punk, the ones who lived it, and not as a passing fad, will always be involved in some way shape or form. I've been at it since I was a kid. Not just as a drummer either... I sang for Sacred Denial and Pleased Youth, as a graphic designer I created licensed merchandise for Metallica, Guns 'n' Roses, and The Rolling Stones, managed bands like Nutrajet, and even was a booking agent for bands like Agnostic Front, Bedlam, and Government Issue with my friend Johnny Stiff. I'm forever the kid at the CBGB's matinees or the A7 Club gigs, only now I need glasses, Rogaine, and a good diet and exercise plan.



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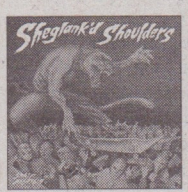

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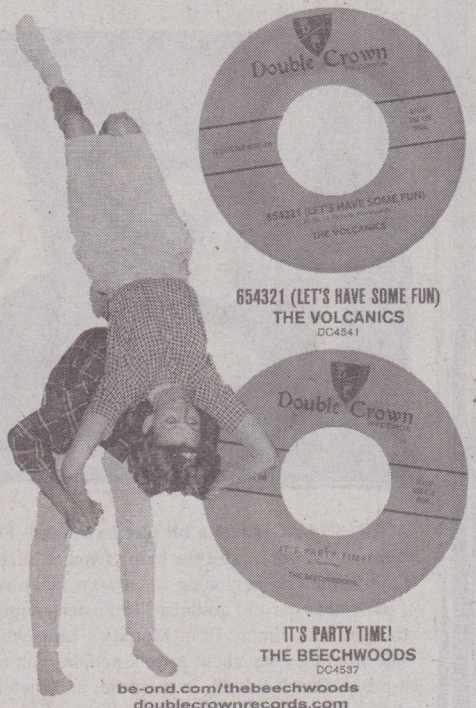

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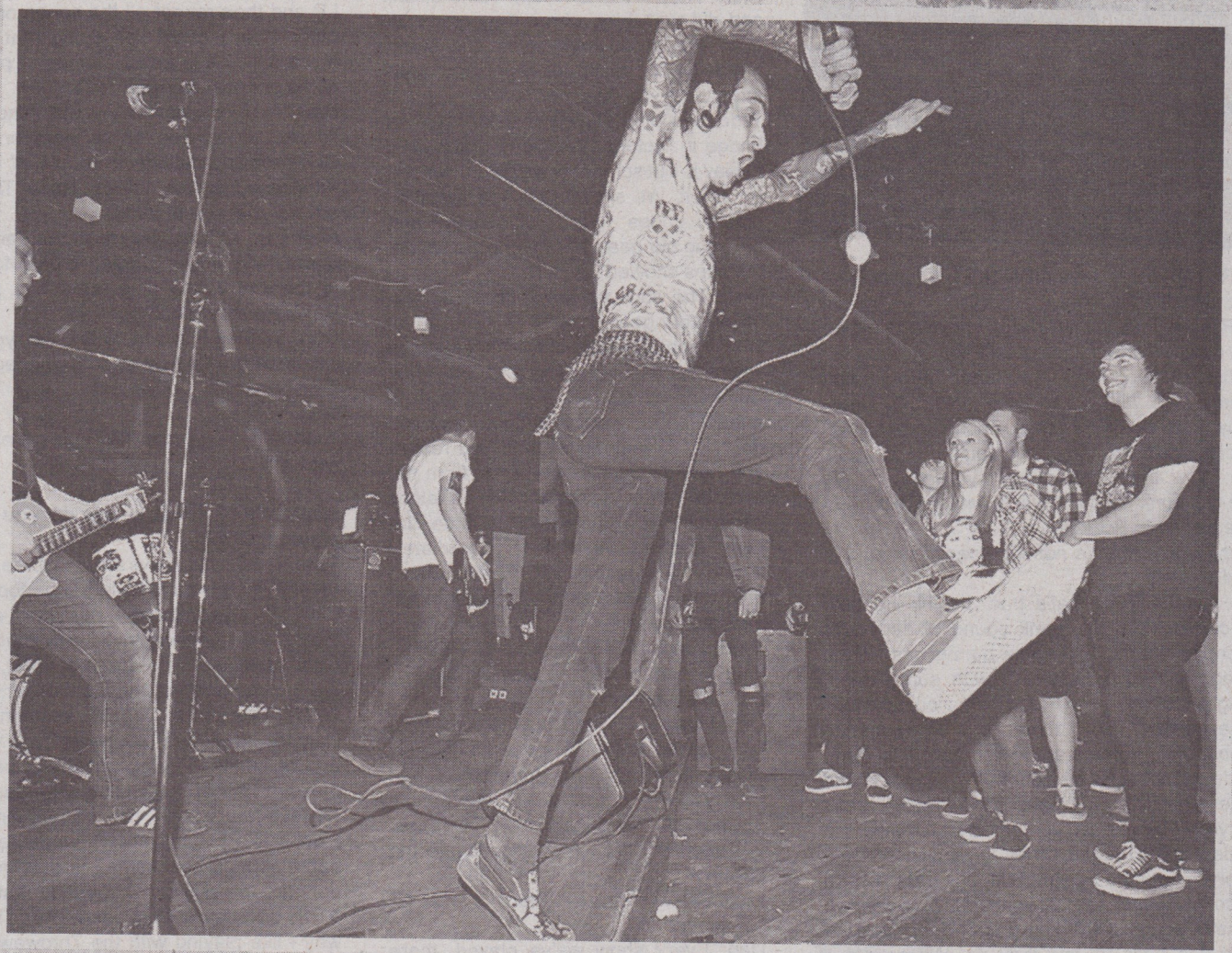
From the ashes of a number of beloved and/or semi-tolerated bands comes a rock and roll beast straight out of motherfuckin' Calgary Alberta. I've called them the best band in the city numerous times—one time in the pages of this here magazine, even! So if MRR says it, it must be true. What is a SPASTIC PANTHER, you ask? Take an overly complicated bassline, throw some '80s-style hardcore punk rock on top, and then throw a microphone at some guy who drinks way too many Nos energy drinks. 'Nuff said.



SPASTIC PANTHERS

Present for the interview:
Handsome Dan Izzo: vocals
Todd Harkness: guitar
Niall Werewolf: bass

Not present:
Bart: former drummer, about to leave the band and work on a beet farm or something at the time of the interview.
Mikey Blotto: new drummer, not invited because he's the new guy

Intro, Interview and Photos by Damien Inbred

Dan: No, don't ask us any questions about skinheads. Scratch that question.

MRR: Okay… how about a brief history of the band. Niall!

Niall: Dan and Todd's band, Sheglank'd Shoulders, was going on hiatus, and mine and Bart's band, Antisocial Club, was disbanding. So Dan approached me and Bart, and then we did it. I met Dan at the Ship & Anchor one night two years ago, and started this shit.

Niall: Todd was the last one to join the band. He won a contest.

Todd: No, that's not true. I didn't actually want to be in the band.

Dan: Actually, I didn't really want Todd in the band. I told him that if he wanted in the band, he had to commit to practicing twice a week, be prepared for four months of touring a year, and he had to get a full sleeve (or at least one Black Flag tattoo). Eventually we reached a compromise that involved none of those things.

MRR: You don't have a Black Flag tattoo?

Todd: No, I'm a sellout.

MRR: Nah, that's okay – I don't have one either. Um, describe the band's sound somewhat.

Todd: I dunno, man. It's super generic and kinda basic, with crazy bass lines and Dan's funny lyrics making it better. Each song's like 30 seconds long. And any band could play it.

Dan: Wow, that's better than my answer of "We take the punk rock and mix it with the hip-hop." I'm a huge Kid Rock fan.

Todd: Really, there's nothing special about this band.

Dan: I don't think that's true. I think we take the classic hardcore punk sound of early-'80s American bands, add some daring bass lines, an aggressive vocal attack with some deep, thought-provoking lyrics (and occasionally some inane lyrics). I think it's a pretty unique combination. If you want to compare it to other bands… [Dan spills his beer here] …I've had half a beer already; I don't think I should be doing this interview. We've been compared by reviewers to bands like The Freeze, Circle Jerks… I don't think anyone's said the Spermbirds, but Todd likes to be compared to the Spermbirds. Actually, we do have some of the same doot-doola-doodle-oodle-doo bass rip-offs they do. We do get a lot of compliments on the bass-playing. Niall Werewolf is a huge celebrity in the bass-player community. Todd and I just hang back and let him do his thing.

Todd: The weirdest band we're always compared to is S.O.A. because…who the fuck even listens to State of Alert?

MRR: About how many shows have you guys played, and which ones have sucked the least?

Todd: We've played like 20 shows.

Niall: No dude, we've played, like almost 30.

Todd: Most of our shows are pretty good. I dunno. The only one that ultra-sucked was on the west coast with all these uptight hardcore kids who didn't know what to make of Dan, and we were all kinda hung over and in a bad mood and didn't play very good, so the show sucked. But every show I've ever played there seems to suck, so it's par for the course.

Dan: At the same time though, I think at least nine people at that show were really into us. At least three of them found my cocaine humor somewhat endearing. I tried to make friends with some bands who I won't mention. Uh, it didn't go so well.

Niall: They were all really stand-offish, and did that thing where they come up front and cross their arms and stand there being really unimpressed with everything you do.

Todd: We also played a show under a bridge in Victoria. We didn't really want to play it, but somehow we got convinced to play it. We showed up and all these hippie dudes were unloading and breaking our gear. The minute we set up, the cops showed up.

Niall: The cops actually offered to help us load our gear.

Dan: Yeah, that was one of those things where it seemed like a good idea. Someone asks, "Hey, you want to do a guerilla show under a bridge?" and you go, "*FUCK* yeah!" And then you realize you have to park a mile away from the show and steer your gear down a sketchy bike path with no lights. Of course, the cops showed up almost immediately during the opening act, which was a guy running his sampler through ten distortion pedals.

Todd: The feedback from this guy was so loud that there was no way we weren't getting shut down.

Dan: I hate to say this, but the cops were fairly gentle to us. This one moderately attractive officer offered to help Niall and I carry Niall's horrendously heavy bass cabinet up the giant rickety staircase. We declined, but we did appreciate the offer.

Niall: She was stronger than me and Dan combined.

Dan: Every show we've played, there have usually been at least a few people who are really stoked on it, so that really makes it worth showing up.

[long "off the record" conversation filled with cocaine references, inside jokes, and determining that sarcasm apparently doesn't translate well into print.]

MRR: Are you guys a seven-inch band, or will you be putting out an LP at some point?

Todd: We were talking about doing this LP called *Panther of Love* for the longest time, but our songs are like 45 seconds long, and I don't think we could write 20 good ones at one time. We can write maybe four good ones at one time. There're so many bands that write really short songs and I'm stoked on their 7", but when I hear the full-length, I'm bored before the end of the first side. Like, listening to 20 Spastic Panther songs at once?! I think we're a good eight-song 7-inch band.

Dan: I agree with Todd, bands with songs this short are better in smaller increments. The same with seeing punk bands live, they should never play longer than half an hour.

Todd: If we could afford to do a one-sided LP and then repeat all the songs on the other side, I could see doing that. But doing split 7"s is good, although I prefer doing our own records.

Dan: We'll continue to put out 7-inches. I'd like to compile all of them onto a CD, probably include a couple of rare, unreleased bonus tracks. Rose Tattoo covers, that sort of thing.

Niall: Um, so does this mean the Panther opera I was writing is going to be vetoed? Is this the wrong time for me to pitch *David Pantherfield*?

Dan: Is that the one about the young skinhead growing up in an orphanage in East London?

Niall: Yeah!

Todd: Maybe we can talk about it at the next jam.

MRR: Which local bands do you like playing with?

Todd: The Throwaways are awesome, and I really like this band called Sabertooth.

Niall: The Wastoids are pretty sweet, even though we've never played with them.

Dan: Berzerker are fucking great, but we've never played with them either.

Todd: There's a certain segment of Calgary bands we will never play with, but legitimate Calgary punk-rock bands that don't talk about fighting other people, we love to play with. Um, but personally, I don't like playing shows where every band sounds the same. It gets really boring. I like playing with bands that are a little bit different from each other. That's why I like playing with the Throwaways, because they sound nothing like us.

Dan: I really like…

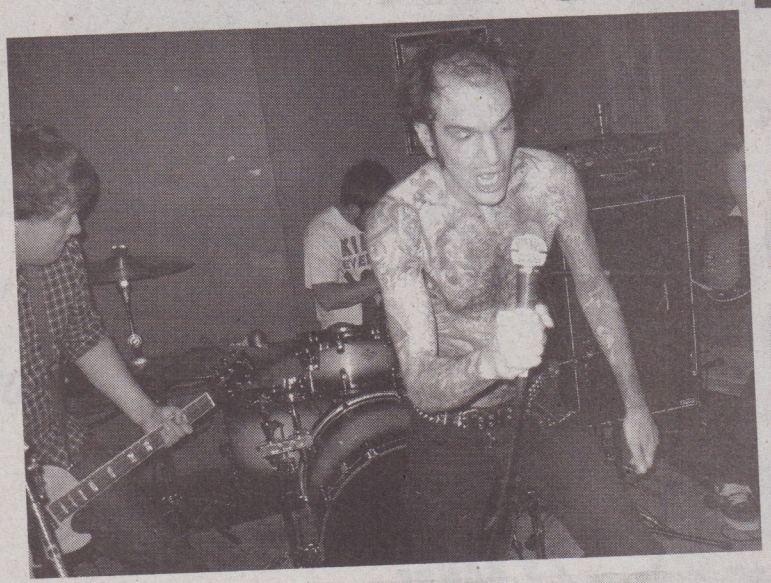
Todd: Dan likes every bad band in Calgary.

Dan: Man, why do you have to slag off other bands like that? Come on, support the scene!

MRR: Outside of the band, what do you guys do? Do you work at record stores, or write zines or anything like that?

Dan: Unfortunately at this point, all of us work real jobs. The Spastic Panthers has not yet reached a point where it can support us. I run a very lucrative

record label called Handsome Dan Records. Todd is the Vice President in charge of sales, marketing, A&R, and… well, Todd does all the work and I just put my pretty face on all the records.
Todd: I work a shitty desk job and I also do ordering for a store called Sloth Records. I also kind of play in this band called the Browns, which jams like twice a year.
Niall: I do the 9-5 thing too, plus some video work. I also play in a band called the Neon Homos, which gets together once in a blue moon as well. We play the odd Bar Mitzvah, but mostly I just work and play in the Spastic Panthers.
Dan: Niall also has a solo record coming out on Handsome Dan, entitled *Silver Bullet, Golden Tears*. Niall's going to write all the music, and get a bunch of guest vocalists to help showcase his bass-noodling skills. So far we've got…uh, well so far we have nobody. We're trying to get Joey Shithead, and probably Kristen from the local band BDFM.
Niall: Dan and I do a duet called "You Can't Wash The Cum Stain Off This Friendship"
Todd: Which is a true story… but Dan doesn't want to talk about it.



MRR: Is it fair to say that the Spastic Panthers are Calgary's equivalent to the legendary Body Count?
Dan: I…I wouldn't say that at all.

MRR: And if so, who would be Ice-T?
Todd: Oh, definitely Niall. But um, no we're not the local equivalent of…we're nowhere near as good as Body Count.
Dan: I would say, though, that Ice-T has been a huge influence on me lyrically. We're actually trying to work on putting more skits onto our records as well. We were listening to a lot of Ice-T on our way back from our Vancouver trip. Niall, Bart and I all liked how Ice-T has these skits where he has a dialogue between two people who both sound exactly like Ice-T. That stuff's brilliant. We really want to work on that for the next record.
Todd: We got really inspired when we saw Public Enemy a few weeks ago, because they had segue-ways into every song, and some of them were longer than the songs, and they were awful and not funny. And so we thought that would be a good thing to pick up.
Niall: The next Panthers record will have lots of answering machine messages.

MRR: How many of you have panther tattoos?
Todd: Just Dan.
Dan: I think Bart was talking about getting one. Niall should work one into his sleeve. He's got this Jack the Ripper half-sleeve going on. I'm still trying to get Todd to get some tattoos. I don't feel really comfortable around people without tattoos. Actually, tattoos are pretty lame. I just got all of mine so I don't have to wear clothes in public anymore. I'm about three sessions away from never having to wear a shirt.

MRR: What's a Spastic Carbomb?
Dan: Ooh! Ooh! Before I explain what's in a Spastic Carbomb… I've known Todd for almost ten years, I've been in bands with Todd for about five years, and I've never seen him drunk. I always try to get Todd drunk, but he doesn't like a lot of beer. It turns out the only thing he likes to drink is tequila. I'm always on this mission to get him drunk, so I figured I should invent a really good tequila drink. So one night we're talking about energy drinks, because we both drink a lot of energy drinks. Todd sez, "Dude, I can't drink Nos, man. Every time I do, I feel like I just did a line of blow." So I think, cool—now I have to invent a drink that has Nos and tequila in it! So I came up with a Nos and tequila depth-charge modeled after the Irish Carbomb. You take a shot of tequila, put it into a high ball glass full of Nos, and you slam the whole thing back.
Todd: We only did it one night, and Dan and I were the only ones who didn't puke.
Dan: Sparkles, a good friend of ours, is a pretty heavy drinker, and he puked almost instantly.
Todd: The bartender who made it for us almost banned it from the pub.
Dan: I had four or five of them, and by the end of the night… I don't know if Todd got drunk at all, because I was blacked out already.

Does it matter which flavor of Nos?
Todd: It's got to be the original.
Dan: And it has to be the one in that stupid fucking bottle.
Todd: Actually in Canada they took the original stuff off the market for like two months and replaced it with a watered-down version that has less caffeine and less of the shit that makes it feel like you did a line of the white lady. It's super shitty now. Just like what they did to Red Bull years ago. But all the energy drinks are way better in the States anyway.

MRR: And what are the band's future plans?
Todd: I think first we should redo the first five answers of this interview, because they were terrible. Um, we're going to work in our new drummer Mikey. We just put out the split 7"with the Throwaways, and we're waiting for some good reviews of that to come out, and then work on a new record.
Niall: I really want to record again soon. We're not a band that likes to sit on our asses for a long time. After we did the first seven-inch, which had eight songs, we started writing songs for the next seven-inch. I think we want to do more little spurts of touring, too.
Todd: I don't want to. I'm perfectly content just sitting in my house.
Dan: We'd really like to tour Europe and Australia. So if there's any European or Australian promoters reading this, get in touch. Or Japan.
Todd: Touring outside North America would be pretty good, Japan especially.
Dan: That being said, we're going to drug Todd up and drag him on at least one Canadian tour, and possibly an American one. We're planning on doing several short trips to the west coast, and I'd like to do at least one trip to the Ontario end of the country. And we're going to hopefully have another 7" out by early next year sometime. It's gonna be called *Cocaine Werewolf*.

Discography:
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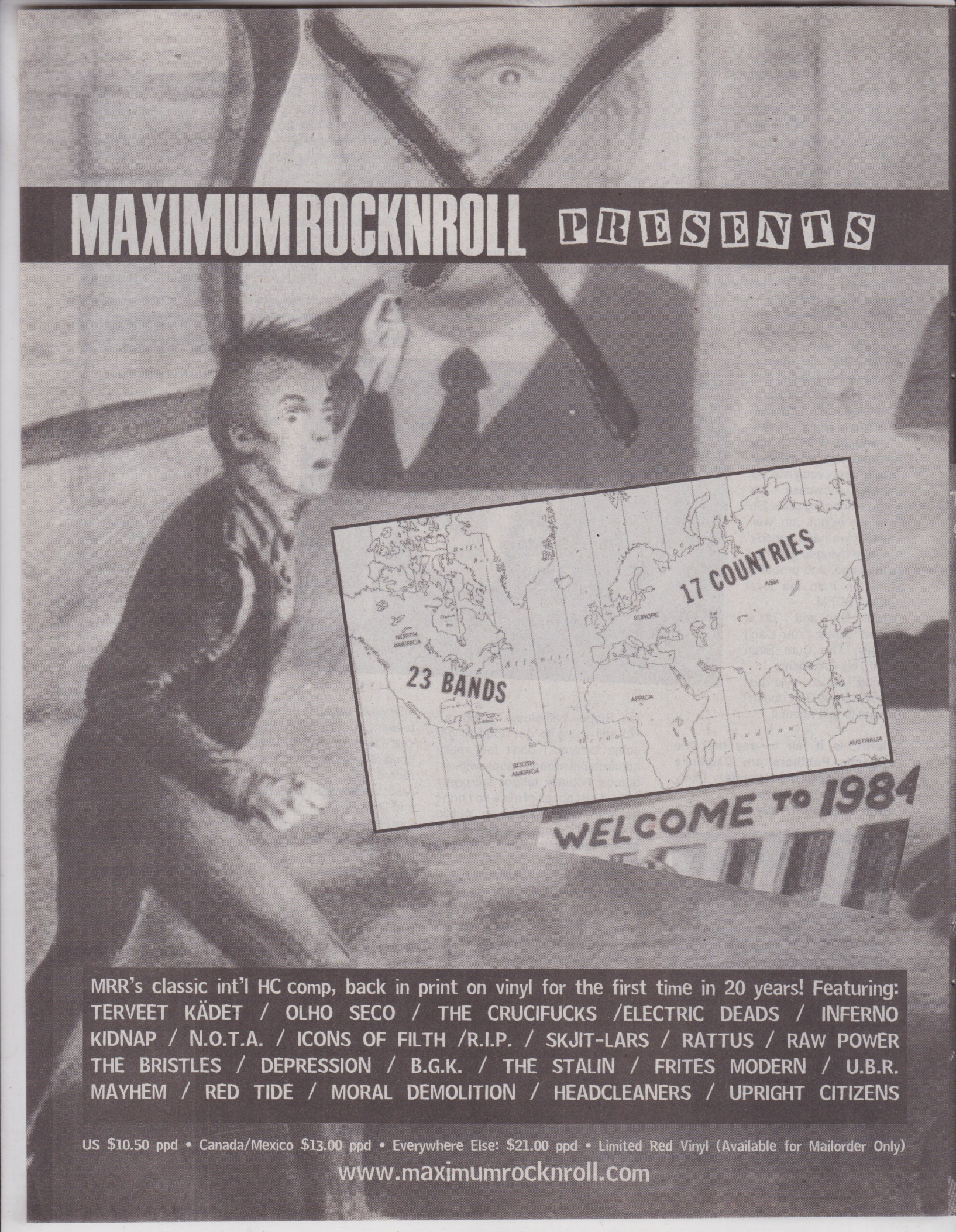
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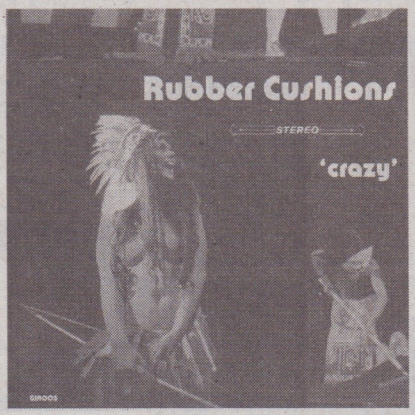

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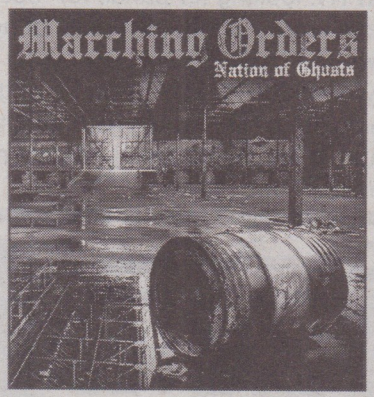

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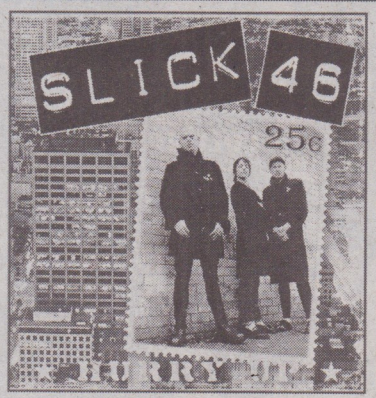

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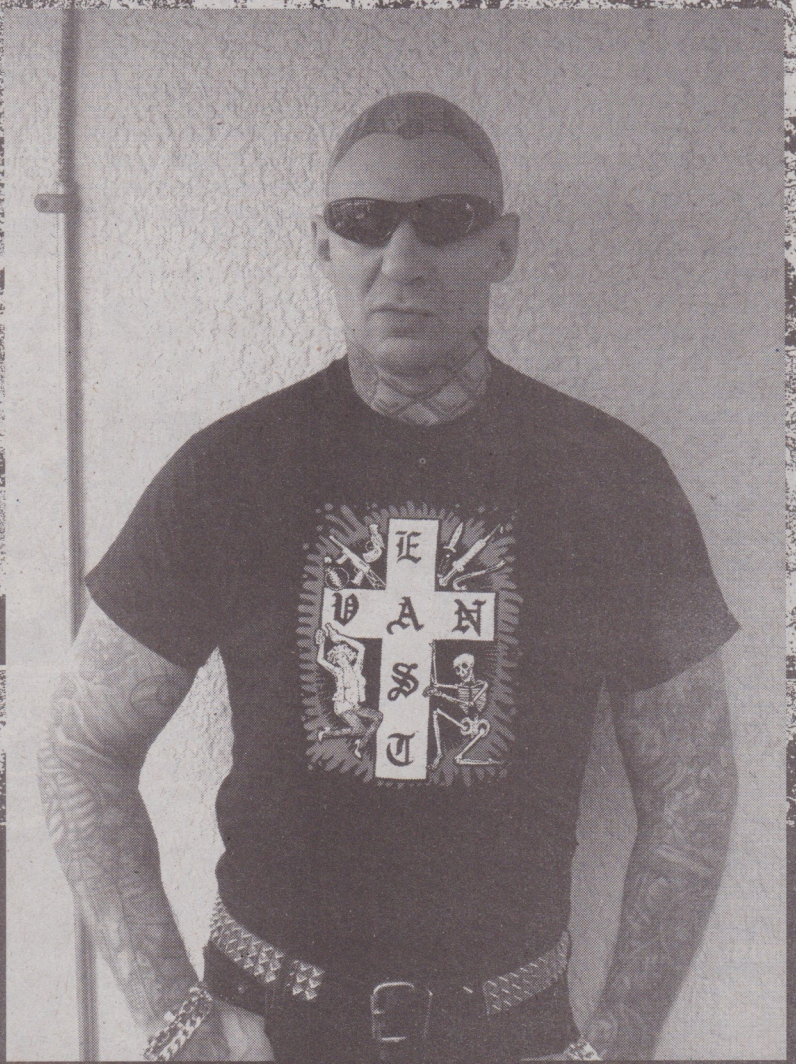
CHRIS WALTER

Chris Walter is a fucking menacing dude. He has navigated the rough and rogue lifestyle of a punk junkie living in East Van(couver) and, unlike most of his contemporaries, he has survived to tell the sordid tales from along the way. To share those tales he started GoFuckYerself Press, which so far has released twenty books, including seventeen written by Walter himself. Walter's writing is ever-evolving but he keeps one steel-toe planted firmly in the underground. Think Bukowski with a point. Wattie with a typewriter.
Interview by craigums.

MRR: How did you progress from your early zine-style writings, to bound autobiographies, to thoroughly researched band biographies to, more recently, full-length novels?
My hardcore punk fanzine, *Pages of Rage*, folded in 1984, and I didn't write again until 1998, when I decided that everything else I'd done with my life had been a complete waste of time. I was using drugs and drinking heavily, so I thought it might be a good idea to leave a book behind as proof of my existence. As a high school dropout on welfare, I wasn't exactly an overachiever. But writing *Beer* was so gratifying that I decided to write another book. For a guy who did nothing but chase the next high, the act of finishing a book was cathartic. I loved putting the story together and thinking about the plot and characters. Admittedly, I also enjoyed the praise I received from my surprised friends, who knew me only as a wasted fuckup. My first four novels were sloppy, 8 ½ x 11 ring-coil affairs that looked like somebody's homework. It wasn't until I quit the liquor and drugs in 2001 that my girlfriend and I began to publish and manufacture actual paperbacks. Editing was almost non-existent in those days, but I like to think that we've improved steadily. Luckily, my girl worked at a printing shop (and still does), which allows me to produce the books at a reasonable price. My success has been a combination of good luck and hard work, and it sure beats the hell out of hanging drywall or slaving in a dusty warehouse. With the economy the way it is, I wouldn't even be able to find those jobs now. I write all day, every weekday, and I'm always thinking about current and future projects. So many of my old friends are dead that I consider myself lucky to still be alive, let alone running a publishing company. Writing gives me a reason to live.

MRR: "Punk" as a culture, an ethos, an attitude, and a history is an element that runs through every book you've written, whether fact or fiction. How, in your forties, is punk still a relevant subject for you?
When I was a kid, punk rock was about smashing things up, making loud noises, getting wasted, and living like an outlaw. I will always love punk rock and I listen to it every day, but now punk is about making my own rules and setting my goals. Punk rock taught me that I could do it myself instead of playing the game and toeing the line. Besides, no mainstream publisher could keep up with my productivity or give me the attention I need. I'm also a control freak when it comes to my books, and I love the autonomy. From cover design to content to everything in between, I have complete control over every detail. Mistakes and fuckups? They're all mine. My influences are the same now as they were before I cleaned up: I like John Steinbeck for his linear and realistic story telling, Bukowski for his brutal honesty, and Irvine Welsh for his black humor. I try to incorporate those three styles and more, bungling them all at times.

MRR: How has being a father affected your lifestyle and perspective?
I have two sons: one is grown and lives in Prague, Czech Republic. Although Max is a metal head with a taste for muscle cars, he works as a computer IT and has never been unemployed. I'm very proud of him, especially since his mother raised him without my help while I was out getting high. Max was brought up on punk rock, and headbangers are different now than they were in the early '80s. When I was a kid, headbangers and punks were mortal enemies, and we engaged in many bloody battles. Nowadays, the two sides have realized that other than the fact that punk lyrics are often socially conscious and rarely about dragons, punk and metal are not really all that different. Luckily, the vasectomy I got after Max was born didn't hold, and my second boy made his appearance in 2000. I went into rehab five month later; for once I made the right choice. I'm so glad to have Frank in my life. He's ten now, and his grades are so good that I contemplated a DNA test to make sure he was really mine. I agree with John Lydon that schools are prisons, but I don't want my son to suffer like I did with the shitty jobs. Along with the writing, Frank gives me another excellent reason to stay off the drugs. I'm very fortunate to have such an awesome family. They're my glue.



MRR: Does GFY Press have any sort of mission statement?
From the start, I wanted to write books about punks, drunks, junkies, and whores for punks, drunks, junkies, and whores. Luckily, my reader base has been a bit larger than that. I avoid unnecessarily large words because too much fancy talk can really mess up a good story. Many people have said to me, "I never read books, but I picked up one of yours and couldn't put it down." I know it sounds boastful, but I write books for people who hate to read. We need more books where the protagonists are not a bunch of rich cunts. Too much stuff out there has been penned by silver-spoon-in-mouth motherfuckers, but I'm here to write for those who don't fit in.

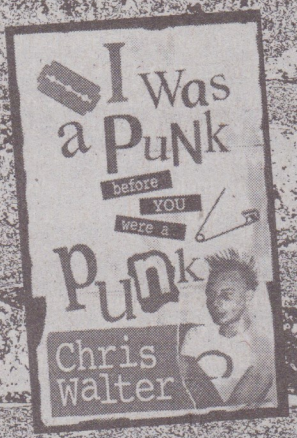
MRR: You have written two band biographies — one about Personality Crisis and another about the DayGlo Abortions. What are some stories you can share as a punk historian about chasing down both people and information for this sort of project?
In both cases, I was fortunate enough to know many of the band members personally, so I was able to contact them directly. Both books had one member who refused to be interviewed, but I was able to interview the key players, so the projects did not suffer greatly as a result. Some of the other players were not as easy to find, but friends and fans came forward to help me locate them. Both books reunited ex-band members, and some of them hadn't seen each other in decades. Biographies are a lot of work, but the sense of accomplishment is greater. I know I'll do others in the future. People seem to dig 'em for the most part. I've been itching to write the biography of SNFU, but an associate has been working on one for several years and I don't want to cut his grass. Still, the clock is ticking, and if he doesn't get it done, then I will. I'm interested primarily in iconic Canadian bands, and if DOA's Joe Keithley hadn't already written about DOA, they would have been perfect. I haven't ruled out covering American or British punk bands, but I want to represent Canada first. This is no fucking beer commercial, but I am Canadian.

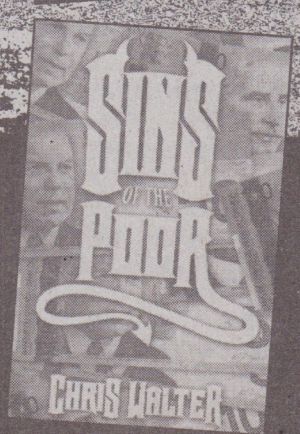
MRR; Gene Simmons once asked Nardwuar why Canadians were always seeking validation from people abroad. "Stop whining to foreigners, 'What do you think? What do you think?'" **Your books are all Canadian—they focus on Canadian bands, have Canadian characters, they take place in Canada, and I'm guessing like everything else in North America they are printed in Canada. What do you have to say about Simmons' comment?**
Sadly, Gene is right. Most Canadian authors set their novels in the USA, which seems very wrong to me. I set my books in Canada because that's where I live and I'm OK with that. Although our conservative prime minister is doing everything he can to turn Canada into a smaller version of the USA, our murder rate is still a fraction of what it is in the States. I'd like to say more good things about Canada, but I really don't like the political climate. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing at an astonishing rate, and I'll never be able to afford a house here in Vancouver. Still, I feel fortunate to live in Canada rather than Mexico or some other third world country. At least we still have the illusion of freedom. My only book that isn't set [entirely] in Canada is *Kaboom*, which is set partly in NYC, and partly in Vancouver. When a New Yorker later wrote to tell me how well I'd described his city, I almost didn't have the heart to tell him I've never been there. But I digress; foreigners kowtow to the USA because it represents such a potentially large market. My books do well in Canada, but I'm virtually unknown in the United States. I'm the Tragically Hip of underground literature. For the record, although I'm not a fan of The Tragically Hip, they're much better than Nickelback. Those fools make me embarrassed to be Canadian.

MRR: What it is like growing up in the wastelands of the Canadian prairies? What does it mean to be from Winnipeg?
For all the freezing temperatures in the winter, the spring floods and the summer bugs, the music scene in Winnipeg has always been an active one. This is partly because a basement loaded with musical gear is good place to party in the winter, but also because Winnipeg has an attitude all of its own. If you're tough (or stubborn) enough to put up with all that Winnipeg has to dish out, then you can do pretty much anything, even if it means leaving town to do it. I'll always have a place in my heart for that bug-infested hellhole. Winnipeg isn't even a cheap place to live anymore, but I always like visiting. There's something about the place that stays with you—kinda like herpes. And the pizza is good.

MRR: In your latest book, *Sins of the Poor,* money is the central character. Your disdain for "the system" in hard to overlook, but how does being a self-publisher work for someone so openly anti-money/anti-system?
I wanted to give away free copies of the book at the launch, but my personal finances didn't allow me to do that. Instead, I just sell them as cheaply as possible. Money taints everything we do and, in most cases, becomes the sole motive behind all endeavours, both commercially and creatively. That shit is so wrong. The name of my publishing company, GoFuckYerself Press, was directed at the established literary industry, and they have retaliated by shutting me out of most bookstores. I send my link to most stores and never hear back from them. Only a select few agree to carry my books, which keeps me from "selling out," whether I want to or not. It might be OK to call your punk band the Fucktards, but the publishing industry is far less forgiving. I'd like to earn enough money to be comfortable, but I don't want to be rich. Then what the fuck would I write about? As it is, I barely make enough to pay the rent and do the next book.

MRR: How long does it typically take you to write a fiction book? How does the ball get—and keep—rolling?
I typically produce two books a year, but biographies take a bit longer. Books always overlap each other; I start the new book when the current one goes to the editors. I write a minimum of 1000 words a day, though I often exceed that number. Since I write full time, the books come out regularly, and they must if I want to survive. Oddly, I don't feel any pressure to create. I love writing, and I'd do it even if I couldn't make any money at it, though I wouldn't be able to devote as much time to my art. My job fucking kills. It's like getting paid to eat cake, though I admit that I do put in a lot of hours.
For more information on GoFuckYourself Press: www.punkbooks.com





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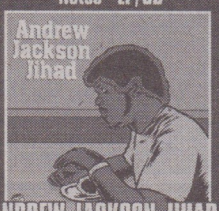

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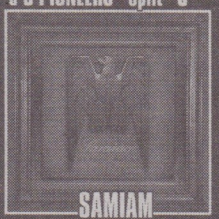

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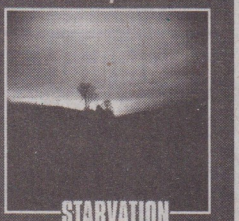

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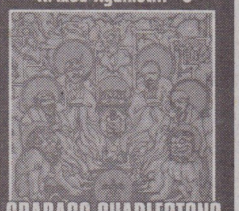

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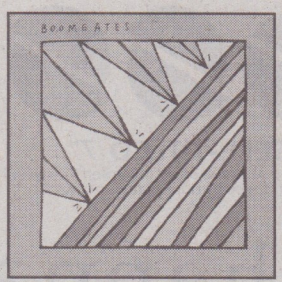

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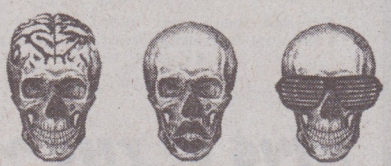

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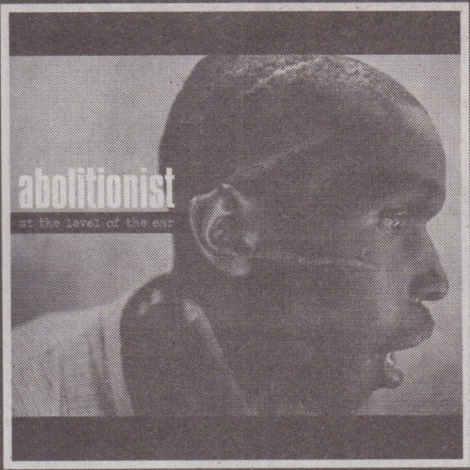

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BOOKS

Sober Living for the Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straight Edge, and Radical Politics
Edited by Gabriel Kuhn
300 pages • $22.95
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www.pmpress.org

Straight Edge is a good example of how a misunderstood idea can have more of an impact on history than the idea in it's correctly interpreted form. For better or worse, over the last thirty years, what was simply a phrase to describe a statement about how one person doesn't see why being both punk and sober is that big of a deal, has become its own ideology, twisted to be compatible with a variety of pre-existing ideologies. Unfortunately, the more moronic applications of the idea have usually been the ones that have gotten most of the attention, but with this book, editor Gabriel Kuhn has collected a good deal of interviews and writings from a variety of folks involved with radical bands, scenes, and political organizing that represent a side of straight edge that is often overlooked, especially in the US.

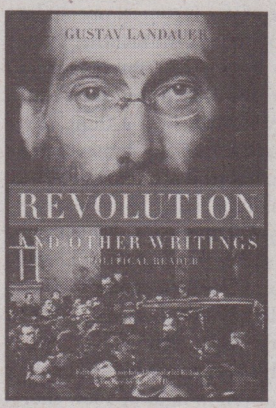
My first question was whether the editor was qualified to compile this book and conduct these interviews, given his experience with hardcore or lack thereof. Mr. Kuhn makes a few references to his own experiences in hardcore in the '90s in a few of the interview questions, but given some of the other books he's worked on, his background seems to be more in sociology and radical politics, and I am always weary of anyone with a cultural studies background attempting to document punk. He also botches a few basic facts and understandings of the history of hardcore in his timeline and in a few interview questions, and there are other times where I feel he's trying to overemphasize the role that straight edge played for a band or individual while interviewing them, in that it seems like some of the people interviewed happened to be straight edge, but it didn't necessarily have a lot to do with what they were involved with (the best example of this is probably in his interview with Bull from R.A.M.B.O.). To this end, it's sort of a paradox in that I'm left wondering why he chose to interview certain people, but enjoyed reading their contributions nonetheless.

All of that said, if you can get past Kuhn's irritating questions, the majority of the interviews and perspectives are interesting and worthwhile reads, and if nothing else, this book provides valuable primary source material. The five "chapters" into which he divides the material are pretty useless as descriptors, but some of the interviews focus more on the activities of certain bands, while others focus on certain regional scenes or tie in the role of straight edge to political ideologies and organizing. Kuhn puts a strong focus on European and South American hardcore, and reading about the lives of hardcore kids and their scenes in countries with more oppressive political climates (especially Israel) is definitely eye-opening. In addition to interviews, there are also a few reprinted "manifestos" ranging from a valuable anti-fascist one to Crimethinc's hyperbolic "Wasted Indeed," and some "reflections" at the end, including a great, level-headed piece by Mark Anderson, author of *Dance of Days* and a longtime DC activist.

What I found to be the two most interesting and timely parts of this book are Nick Riotfag's reprinted "Towards a Less Fucked Up World: Sobriety and Anarchist Struggle" pamphlet (which I had read before, and identified with immensely), and his contribution to this book that offers a "radical queer critique of intoxication culture." The former, in short, discusses the roles that intoxicants play in activist and oppressed communities, and Nick's frustrations with attempting to get his own communities to acknowledge the glaring contradictions between their ideologies and this reality. In the latter, he applies this critique specifically to queer communities, but also comments on the homophobia he's experienced with straight edge hardcore scenes, and his ideas for bridging the gap between straight edge and queer culture. (On a sidenote, Cristy Road's *Indestructible* offers somewhat of a separate, but not necessarily contradictory perspective on the latter, and would make for an interesting back-to-back read).

Despite my criticism of the author, I'm glad this book was published. It could've used a fact-checker, and I'm a bit concerned that readers who are unfamiliar with hardcore or straightedge might walk away with certain misconceptions, but if absolutely nothing else, it's a great collection of primary source material of under-documented hardcore scenes and perspectives on radical sobriety.

—Dan Goetz



Revolution and Other Writings: A Political Reader
Gustav Landauer
Edited and Translated by Gabriel Kuhn
360 pages • $26.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

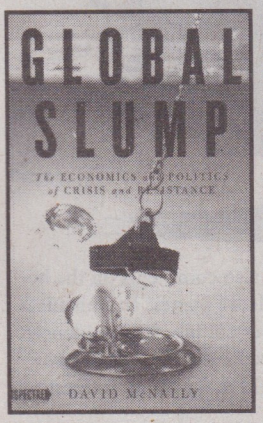
Political decision makers in the U.S. have been beating dead ideologies into infrastructural concrete for a while now, but one would think systemic failure would motivate them to explore new ways of thinking about the world. Hallucinogens might or might not help, so instead I'm suggesting a simple exploration of alternate politics. It's during these times of economic and political crisis that it's sadly refreshing to read a collection of century old works on the subject of revolution. And thus, I found *Revolution,* a new volume of Gustav Landauer's selected writings in English, to be of contemporary interest.

Landauer was an anarchist and socialist agitator throughout his life, writing, organizing, failing, and returning to his political passions. This volume focuses on his political writings, though he also wrote on aesthetics and is responsible for translations of Mark Twain, Tolstoy, and other novelists to German. The choice to organize the book thematically and chronologically works to show the evolution in his thinking from his early ideas about anarchism to its role in socialism.

Among newspaper pieces, pamphlets, and letters to the likes of Max Nettlau and Martin Buber, the title piece, "Revolution," represents Landauer's most detailed work in the volume. The piece is thematically reminiscent of Max Weber's writing about the state or Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*, with differing conclusions. Landauer addresses questions concerning why societies change and why tyranny is peacefully upheld. He argues that societies are exploded by the formation of utopias, which become new societies and face new problems until they are revolutionized by a new utopia and so on. Landauer writes that "...social revolution can neither come to life nor stay alive without a series of political revolutions." The relation of societal evolution and institutionalization is at the base of the interplay of these forces.

Revolution is an important collection of writing by an often forgotten twentieth century anarchist thinker on par with Bakunin and an associate of Kropotkin. While Landauer's writing style may not be palatable to those looking for a cut-and-paste form to a better society, the ideas he addresses in his essays are, sadly, as relevant today as they were when he was writing.

—Zane Grant



Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance
David McNally
142 pages • $20.00
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org

As the verbose subtitle should indicate, David McNally's *Global Slump* is really two different books.

The first, from which I learned quite a bit, takes up about the first two-thirds of the text, providing a nuanced and plain spoken Marxist account of our current financial "crisis," "predicament," or whatever kindly euphemism you prefer. The scope of this segment of the book is vast, narrating the prehistory and subsequent expansion of neoliberal economic strategy and culminating with a precise analysis of the literally insane financial instruments that ultimately sank the proverbial ship. The motor of all of this is McNally's clear account of the rise, uses and abuses of debt and credit. Now, debt serves a certain economic function, facilitating consumer spending in times of contracting wages and over-production, and it is precisely this debt that banks chopped up into securities for investors to buy into. That is, as McNally shows us, a corporate investor owns a piece of, for instance, my student loan, receiving a portion of the interest I pay, and betting on the fact that I won't default (Hey, Mr. Blankfein, I'll see what I can do about that!). But defaults do occur, and in our recent case occurred on a massive scale, such that those banks that had (moronically) staked their financial solvency on such a thing *never happening* required huge injections of taxpayer funds. McNally contextualizes these developments within an argument internal to political economy, recasting the past forty years as a series of expansions and slumps rather than continued downturn. This latest slump, however, is a wholly different beast, which gives the text its title. McNally writes that such a 'global slump' encompasses "a whole period of interconnected crises—the bursting of a real estate bubble; a wave of bank collapses; a series of sovereign debt crises; relapses into recession—that go on for years without a sustained economic recovery." Rosy, right?

Now, I'm not an economist, but I found McNally's arguments in this first half both persuasive and refreshingly comprehensible. Even in light of a few shortcomings – a familiar Marxist disdain for other theoretical models, some smug oversimplification, and the lingering worry that McNally may have partaken in some less-than-attentive cutting and pasting of repetitive passages – this portion of the book hums along nicely, and I left with the feeling that I'd been given a reasonably digested but cogent and incisive leftist analysis of the historical roots of our current economic moment.

The second part of the text, on the other hand, is a bit of a jumble. McNally gives himself one chapter each to describe i.) the myriad ways capitalism impoverishes people differently along axes of race and class and ii.) potentially hopeful modes of resistance to late capitalism. These topics are huge, and they're just too complex to tackle in a scant eighty pages. Predictably, the space constraints limit the possibilities for in-depth analysis: the former chapter never feels like more than a catalogue of evil shit capitalism has done, and the latter never gives the reader a sense of why these resistance movements are so particular to this historical moment. It's not that McNally is *wrong* about any of the instances he describes; it's just that better, more nuanced books have been written on every subject he touches.

Sadly, the unfocused, "kitchen-sink" approach of these final chapters encourages McNally to succumb too readily to less-than-helpful writing tendencies: while it might be rhetorically satisfying to take down the "neoliberal bullies," for instance, exerting undue influence at the World Bank, it doesn't come close to approximating the reality of economic relations between that institution and the rest of the world—coercion is part of the game, but it's not as if Milton Friedman was rappelling down chimneys and locking people in broom closets until they relented. Such imagery doesn't do justice to the complexity of McNally's *own* earlier arguments; it takes multifarious world events and pares them down to schoolyard epithets. I have a hard time seeing how analytical rigor survives when one merely makes an ogre or bogeyman of one's subject.

—Maxwell Tremblay

Foxtrot Echo Lima Tango
Christian Flamm and Mark Sperlinger
160 pages • £10
foxtrotecholimatango.blogspot.com

I keep this thing in plastic bag in my room and it isn't allowed to leave my house. And I'm not the only one I know with such a draconian policy for perusing this historical document modestly masquerading as a book. But its spirit is that of a fanzine, and to read it is to be totally immersed in the excitement of a band changing the way you look at the world. The 1979-89 decade of this Birmingham, England pop outfit led by Lawrence produced ten records that defied all categories of post-'77 splintering. Classical guitarists obsessed with Television idolatry for the personality cult (see: Johnny Rotten), sharing bills with the Chills, and featuring members of the Servents and Biff Bang Pow!, there is more than enough fodder here for a book.

If it is possible for a band to change even the way you look at design, typography, or speech, let alone guitar playing and lyricism, then this publication reflects such an education in Felt The fonts and the textures of pages pair intuitively with the well-crafted essays, testimonials, lightly edited interviews, and critical analysis which coagulate into the portrait of a band's social effect. Contributors include Tim Gane, JC Brouchard, and about twenty other fans. One or two contributions stick out like shoes in a punch bowl—Matt Fishbeck and Anh Do's meaninglessly banal email exchange plod along like overhearing a boring cellphone conversation about some guy who's (literally) trying to impress us with Ariel Pink and Girls. Aside, this would probably skate through unnoticed in any other tribute, but the bar has been raised so high in this collection that one must study, and try, and come to their history of Felt with total authenticity and innovation in order to get noticed. A new way of thinking about what your fanzine can do, what your band can do, and the world they might reach beyond the limits of music.

—Jess Scott

Sins of the Poor
Chris Walter
243 pages • $12.59
GoFuckYourself Press
www.punkbooks.com

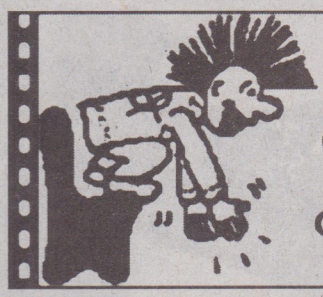
Throughout Walter's *seventeen* published books you can trace an ever-broadening world-view. The early books take place almost exclusively within the Canadian underground punk community but, slowly, new elements have been making their way into his stories—non-punk protagonists, sympathetic authority figures, and the real world have all been creeping in. He claims to write about punks, junkies and whores *for* punks, junkies and whores but each new release stretches beyond that demographic, and with increasing success. Now, with *Sins of the Poor,* you can remove any trace elements of "punk" and what remains is still a cohesive, inspired and thoughtful read. But don't think it is any less gritty…

A single mom struggles to make rent. Two low-level drug-dealers lose their collective wallet in a street fight leaving them short on their loan. A parole officer with mild Asperger's tirelessly tries to convince himself that his online stock trading is not the same as having a gambling addiction. A surly loan shark gets stiffed and then gets vengeful. All their paths eventually cross and then in kicks the real yarn-spinning.

The main character in this book, despite all its elusiveness, is money—the cause and solution to everybody's problems. There is a Guy Ritchie-style of storytelling at work here; seemingly random characters and events weave in and around each other until ultimately the interconnectedness of people, jobs, communities, youth, government, recreation, education, *everything*… becomes clear and unavoidable—and inspiring. Regardless of Walter's brooding and loathsome take on humanity he does a pretty good job of illustrating our need for one another. He also likes a good dose of street justice which is hard not to enjoy.

—Craigums

MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

MAYBE PARTYING WILL HELP

Dave Travis was a teenager when his dad gave him an old video camera. He began recording punk bands around Los Angeles. Eventually he would co-direct Black Flag's "Slip It In" video with Dave Markey among other video projects.

A History Lesson Part 1 is Travis' first collection of the live footage of punk bands he shot in 1984. The bands featured are The Minutemen, The Meat Puppets, Redd Kross and Twisted Roots. Each band gets a few songs that are interspersed with interviews from the '90s. The live footage is raw, but that's what I like about. A single mostly static shot captures some rare moments in punk history probably thought to be lost forever. Vicki Peterson of the Bangles performs as a member of Redd Kross in this footage. Redd Kross guitarist Jeff McDonald recalls in his interview that was the only time Peterson performed with the band.

Although the interviews in **A History Lesson Part 1** are somewhat on the unnecessary side, there are a few interesting moments, particularly the ones with The Meat Puppets. Those guys seem completely out of their minds. Unfortunately, there isn't a D. Boon interview. (www.ahistorylesson.com)

The thing that annoyed me about seeing **The Taqwacores** didn't really have anything to do with the film. It was the introduction by the employee of the Pacific Film Archive. He related that the Islamic punk movement known as Taqwacore was started in a book as fiction. Allegedly Muslims read the book and started bands. Really? I have hard time believing that before 2003 there were no Muslim punk bands. I own a compilation of Iranian garage bands from the '60s so there has to be more going on than we are aware. Weren't The Clash rockin' the Casbah back in the '80s?

The film **The Taqwacores** is based on the book of the same name. An engineering student Yusef moves into a punk house. From the outside this punk house looks like an abandoned bar with some offices upstairs and is located in a desolate industrial area. The house is made up of a cross section of punk types including a female who wears a burka adorned with patches and buttons. Just like any other punks they have different ideas of what is acceptable behavior and they are not above being outwardly aggressive about it. The one thing they all have in common is their religious faith although each is at her/his own point of practicing and/ or rebelling against it. There is no explanation of why Yusef ends up living there.

The viewer is introduced to the scene as Yusef is. He becomes familiarized with his new housemates and punk rock at the same time. He also begins questioning his own religious beliefs. He starts to smoke cigarettes, gets interested in women, masturbates and even starts screening his parents' phonecalls. Although Yusef never becomes a punk, he is definitely sympathetic with his housemates' lifestyle choices. In one scene Yusef stands up to the masculine straight edge Umar in defense of another housemate. Although Yusef doesn't really get through to Umar, this brief questioning of Umar's attitude forces him to think at least momentarily. The rest of the time people avoid pissing him off.

The Taqwacores comes across as a made for TV movie. A wide variety of personalities are thrown together in a living arrangement. The only constant connection they have is the Islamic faith. They combine prayer with partying. Each one leans toward a stereotype of some faction of punk. Not surprisingly, there is a range of philosophical conflict among the housemates.

It is hard for me to believe that the characters in **The Taqwacores** would still want to practice Islam. I gave up on organized religion as a teen. I recall punks getting into Hare Krishna in the '80s, but the ones that seemed serious about it usually ended up leaving punk behind. Though I guess it isn't uncommon these days for punks to embrace religion. There are Christian punks. Why wouldn't there also be Muslim punks?

The big climatic ending of **The Taqwacores** is somewhat predictable, but it is done in a creative and slightly shocking way. Those few minutes make the film worth watching. (www.rumanni.com/taqwacore/home.html)

As long as I have been interested in films (my whole life?) I have been a fervent believer in the auteur theory whether I knew it or not. The auteur theory maintains that a film is a specific vision of the director. Films by directors who follow a personal vision are more interesting to watch than formulaic films whether the films ends up succeeding or failing in is intentions. Two of the originators of the auteur theory François Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard are the subject of the documentary **Two In The Wave.**

Truffaut and Godard are two of the most influential and well-known directors in the French New Wave cinema movement of the late 1950s and 1960s. **Two In The Wave** uses archival interviews and film clips to compare and contrast the careers of the two filmmakers. These are interspersed with shots of a woman looking at scrap books, reading newspaper articles, sitting in a movie theater and simply pondering the lives of these directors. Though these are simply filler it does end up giving the impression of a '60s French New Wave film.

Truffaut was raised by his grandmother and did not live with his parents until after her death when he was ten years old. He escaped his home life by going to the cinema. At age sixteen he starts his own film club, but he has to resort to stealing to pay for it. He gets caught and ends up in jail. He then becomes a film critic writing for *Arts* and *Cahiers du cinéma*. His confrontational style gets him banned from the Cannes Film Festival in 1958. However, the next year he is invited to the festival and he receives the best director award for his debut film **The 400 Blows.**

Godard grew up in a more traditional upper class setting. Although he comes to the cinema later than Truffaut, he is no less passionate about it. The two meet eventually after attending many of the same films. Godard also becomes a film critic. He is less controversial than Truffaut. At the time Truffaut is receiving his award at Cannes, Godard is left behind working at the *Cahiers du cinéma* office. He complains that he should be at Cannes as well. The following year Godard makes his debut full-length film **Breathless** based on a script idea written by Truffaut.

Although Truffaut and Godard's film careers start off similarly, they eventually go in opposite directions. **Two In The Wave** sees the departure point as the Paris riots of 1968. Truffaut continues to focus on his film career. Godard becomes more involved in politics. Godard also attempts to reinvent films every time he makes one. The result for Godard is that his films become more experimental. Truffaut tends to lean more toward the Hollywood style even ending up with an acting role in **Close Encounters of The Third Kind.** Even still the two filmmakers continue to influence each other. When Truffaut passes away in 1984, **Two In The Wave** points out that Godard has lost his last supporter. Godard in his film **Histoire(s) du cinéma** refers to Truffaut as the greatest film critic. Godard continues to make films. His latest 2010's **Socialism** has not yet been released in the US.

Although the director of **Two In The Wave** Emmanuel Laurent obviously respects both Truffaut's and Godard's cinematic history, he does set up the viewer to make a choice of which filmmaking style she/he prefers. I am still pondering the dichotomy between the each director's upbringing and where they end up in their career. Truffaut moves from hotheaded film critic to established filmmaker while Godard goes from a more open-minded critic into an outsider filmmaker. The films of both Truffaut and Godard seem to tell their life stories in a true auteur way. It is very interesting to watch. (www.filmsduparadoxe.com/deuxvaguecat.html)

We're still fighting to save San Francisco radio station KUSF. Check out savekusf.org for more information and to help out.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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(AU) Andrew Underwood

THE AFTERNOON GENTLEMEN / OSK – split EP

Four of the five songs on the GENTLEMEN's side are about problems that they have with the current grind/hardcore scene. It's funny, because I hate most modern grind and powerviolence shit because of humorous scene-related lyrics, so, we're off to a bad start. This is really tight and fairly metallic grind with really shitty vocals—you've got the Jon Chang bird squawks and that kind of exaggerated Dan Lactose/SPAZZ style that people have run into the ground. Most fans of the genre would probably really like this, just not me. OSK also plays modern grind, and fucking sucks dog shit. I feel like one of those grumpy metalheads that think any record after *Hell Awaits* is crap, but lately I feel like this shit pretty much peaked with *Expression of Pain*. (AH)
(Undislessed)

AFTER THE FALL – "Eradication" CD

Metallic riffs, emotional breakdowns and melodic nu-metal vocals are the name of the game here on this record, which, tellingly, was put out by a label that recently re-released a few BLINK 182 CDs. Yuck. (JH)
(Mightier Than Sword)

AGE – "Survive" EP

Here we have the most recent offering from Japanese crust veterans AGE. It carries on in the same style of earlier output—ripping metal crust with blazing solos and a heavy MOTORHEAD/rock influence in the guitar style. Most other bands who play in a similar style, while accomplished for sure, aren't nearly as well-oiled—and, in their defense, also aren't nearly as old (Age have been at it for a while!). Irregardless, Age's delivery is vicious and a lot of it, to my ears, is due to really intelligent song-structures, with cool turn-arounds between parts, stylistic focus, and really precise playing. While I like my ASBESTOS and SDS, Age take the genre to another level of intensity. In the process I think the aforementioned bands contain a charm that maybe Age compromise in their precision, but that's not to say they're anything less than vanguards of this genre. These guys are pretty much as good as it gets. Another sick slab of ripping thrash motor crust. (DB)
(Black Water)

AGE / GIUDA – split EP

With every new record, AGE further establishes their claim to the throne that SDS once occupied in the Japanese (and international) hardcore scene. Perfectly executed Motörpunk with a genuine sense of fun and chops. "Invisible Future" thrashes as hard as anything AGE have ever done, built around an incredibly catchy riff and a raging solo. Also worth noting: while the comparison doesn't translate well on vinyl, trust me when I say that their singer is the Japanese crust Mick Jagger. Dude's got stage moves for *days*. This split is worth it for these tracks alone, though the GUIDA track is quite a bit better than some of the other newer stuff of theirs I've heard recently. This one reminds me a quite bit of FINAL WARNING (NY)—simple, heavy crust with a really massive breakdown that has me moshing in my chair. (AU)
(Break the Chains)

AIRES & GRACES – "Damage Done" EP

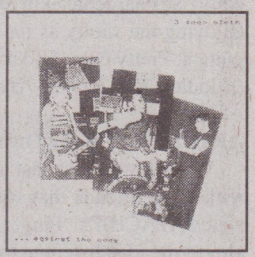
This is a posthumous release from one of the most exciting newer streetpunk/Oi bands that burst on to the US punk scene in recent years. With four songs from the same recording session that resulted in the *What Happened to the Kids?* EP from a couple of years back, you know that this is gonna be a scorcher. With their aggressive yet catchy songs highlighted by the gravelly vocals and thoughtful lyrics that usually transcend the more common topics of drinking and fighting that dominate street-punk, AIRES & GRAVES were a breath of fresh air (no pun intended). Though they are now broken up, thankfully there have risen a couple of new bands including NOi!SE who are arguably even better! (ML)
(Busted Knuckle)

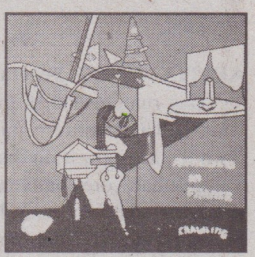
AMERICANS IN FRANCE – "Crawling" CD

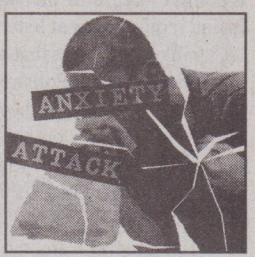
AMERICANS IN FRANCE is the PIXIES in the same way that INTERPOL is JOY DIVISION. Understand? It's not totally terrible, though; it's actually pretty good. (MM)
(Odessa)

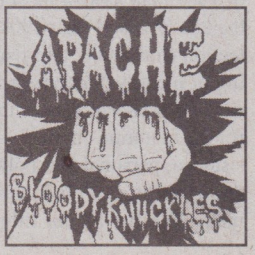
ANIHILATED – "Path to Destruction" LP

This band was around at the same time and followed a similar path to ONSLAUGHT, ENGLISH DOGS, etc. During the demo era it was pretty basic DISCHARGE/GBH Brit-punk, but this 12" is killer crossover, just hinting at the full-on SLAYER worship that they played on the two LPs that would follow. I actually really dig all their shit, and although ONSLAUGHT is much more well known, most likely due to PUSHEAD putting out their first LP, these guys are just as good, and never recorded anything as laughable as the *Search for Sanity* LP. Killer cover art by fellow stench lord Mid, and a nice poster insert as well. Recommended for punks that can handle a little metal. (AH)
(Agipunk)









ANTILLECTUAL – "Start from Scratch!" CD

Apparently this is out on vinyl in the States, but lucky me got a CD to review. Unfortunately, there was no info whatsoever included with the disc, but I can tell you it's twelve tracks of very progressive, very rocking, mildly metallic and dash poppy melodic hardcore. Think FARSIDE (remember them!?) mixing it up with STRIKE ANYWHERE and STRUNG OUT. And I just love the dashes of prog rock à la CAMEL. Great stuff... (RK)
(Square of Opposition)

ANXIETY ATTACK – "Even If" EP

So, as far as I can tell, this band is from France, but the internet tells me they might be from So-Cal, and another anonymous source here says they could be from Kansas City. I'm going to go with France, as the labels that went in on the release of this record are from France. These kids play fast, early-'80s hardcore akin to URBAN WASTE. I am enjoying the snotty as fuck vocals and fuzzed-out guitars. Pretty cool, I do say. (BD)
(Middle Class Zombie Attack / Build Me a Bomb)

APACHE – "On the Outside/Bloody Knuckles"

Why it was just last night after a few beers with some friends that we decided we *needed* to watch APACHE's "Finger Banger" video again? I almost dreaded listening to this, thinking that nothing could ever match the awesomeness of "Finger Banger." If it hadn't been assigned to me, I might not even have listened to it. Luckily the *MRR* record gods decided that KK should review this one. "On the Outside" is an excellent, sort of mellow, catchy track (that goes on a tad too long). Lucky for the band the A-side is such a good track, because the B-side sounds like an old school "jam" with way too much guitar, drums, bass and vocals. (KK)
(Savage)

APATIA – "100% Vegetarian Band" LP

Long-running Polish punks APATIA are a fascinating band because initial listens always lean towards the impression that what they are doing—a simple hardcore combination of hoarse, sung vocals over relatively plain hardcore—is bland. But as any of their records progress, the anthemic and repetitive nature of their music draws the listener in and requires repeat listens to find its strength and let it sink in. At least that's the case with a listener who doesn't speak Polish. The lyrics are largely in their native language (though translations are provided) and there's probably a different power in being able to match the meaning with the music as you listen. Their 2007 LP *Uleglosc* featured a cover from VERBAL ASSAULT's *Learn* LP, and their sound in general leans more towards the hardcore of 1987 than 1982—most of these songs date from the late '80s and early '90s on this fifteen song collection from 2000, and feature a similar intertwining of melody, hardcore energy and powerful rock riffs as on *Learn*. This re-mastered reissue—I think for the first time on vinyl—features lyrics about resistance, personal and political, but more poetic in the tradition of Polish hardcore than overtly dogmatic like the album title might suggest, though yes, there're 100% pro-vegetarian lyrics and the cover has a picture of a monkey hugging a pigeon. Great release from a classic band! (KS)
(Pasazer)

ARMS ALOFT / THE MANIX – split EP

Before we really get into it, this record has song on it about Four Loko, the brand of alcoholic energy drink that it is now illegal to sell here in California. For those of you still reading, the two bands on this split hail from the frozen Midwest, but you don't need to read the liner notes to figure that out. ARMS ALOFT and the MANIX both worship at the altars of the monsters of Midwestern pop-punk. You know what (and who) I'm talking about. Both of the bands sound exactly the same, except ARMS ALOFT wants to sing about jobs and exs, and MANIX just wanna fuckin' party, dude. Only for folks who have absolutely every other record that sounds like this already. (LP)
(Kiss of Death)

THE ASSASSINATORS – "I Disse Morke Tider" EP

Yes! This is an easy choice for fans of political melodic hardcore with dual female vocals. The ASSASSINATORS attack the recent (more) racist turn of rich Western societies, in particular in their country of Denmark, and celebrate the chance punks have to create some hope for themselves. People down with LA FRACTION or BURNING KITCHEN will be wise to snap this up, though the ASSASSINATORS are a little more metallic than these bands. Two of the four songs are over three minutes long, which usually is bad, but these kids really pull it off well. It's tough when you're expected to play for an hour. My only critique is this sentiment from the explanation of the song "De Fremmedes Haer": "Unlike the indigenous people of this planet, white people have no idea what it means to live in harmony with their surroundings." I don't think it's accurate or helpful to 1.) Lump all "indigenous" people together, or 2.) Put them on essentially a racist pedestal of being good stewards of the earth. That aside, this is a great record. The lyrics are in Danish, and English translations and explanations are provided. (JM)
(Alerta Anti-Fascista / Halo of Flies)

AUXES – "Ichkannnichtmehr" CD

Since this features the bulk of MILEMARKER, I'm shocked to see how powerful it gets at times; then again, the musical variation and heartfelt screaming is very much what one would expect from Dave Laney and company. But this is way more intense than anything I've heard that crew tackle before. Imagine the post-hardcore experimentation and insightful lyrics of MILEMARKER stripped of all weak indie pop inclination and replaced with a type of DRIVE LIKE JEHU heavy-yet-melodic energy, and you are getting closer to where AUXES resides in sound. Each track stands on its own and the album never gets monotonous; in fact I've listened to it three times today already and each time I'm digging it more and more. This is the type of post-hardcore stuff I can get into; the type that is pretty much still hardcore! Check it out. (BG)
(Gunner)

THE BABIES – LP

Brooklyn's project of one part VIVIAN GIRLS, one part WOODS is the BABIES, and they've picked right up from their two singles of last year with this shamble-y rock-pop LP. These tracks are perfect for hanging in the green grass during summer, but I'm not sure if it would really court anyone who wasn't already committed to the Woodsist/Captured Tracks scrappy pop empires. The indie-pop guitar hooks are by far the most thrilling part of the group's effort…some tracks' licks ("Run Me Over," "Sunset") are so lackadaisical and grooving they more than conjure the great styles of Sean-Paul Presley, making one wonder: What would happen if Ethel Merman joined NODZZZ? (Probably not the right crowd or age group for either of those references, but I just couldn't help it!) "Voice Like Thunder" expands a lyrical naivety that seems more natural than "All Things Come to Pass" but both will have your arms swinging in the crowd. "Caroline" gives the music enough air, an extended introduction showcases the locked-in quality of the musicians, the foundation of this record's ambition. I was surprised to find that I think "Meet Me in the City"—the A-side of the Make a Mess single—still seemed the strongest hit, but not without some close seconds. If you're into anyone mentioned in this paragraph (save for Ethel?) you're probably already boppin' around town to this on your headphones! (JS)
(Shrimper)

BAD DREAMS ALWAYS – "20 Centuries of Hate" CD

This is the kind of metal I can get behind. Heavy, overlaid and fucking tough guitars drive this thing like a homicidal mass transit operator OD'd on Ritalin. Most of it is fast as hell and the vocalist is appropriately bilious. But the sick crust style means the songs are only 90 seconds long. I could play almost any of these eight tracks again and again with a "fuck yes" at the end. In lieu of packaging, the CD goes in your computer and you can watch their video and such, but like the DESCENDENTS, this band is probably best if you don't know what they're saying. (JM)
(Anarkopunx)

BASTARDATOR – "Identify the Dead" LP

I believe these guys already have the Fenriz seal of approval as this thing came out a while ago. If you don't keep up with the ramblings of Hank Amarillo, this is pretty righteous old school thrash metal—not a ton of punk going on here, other than BROKEN BONES-style crossover (in fact, the shirts that the dudes are wearing spell it out pretty much: the aforementioned BONES, ONSLAUGHT and INEPSY). I hear some BULLDOZER in here as well. All in all, pretty killer shit. (AH)
(Tardis)

BATALJ / SUCKINIM BAENAIM – split EP

Fuck yeah! SUCKINIM BAENAIM is a four-piece from Israel doing what can only be described as LOCUST worship. They do it right, too. The vocals aren't as screechy, but the rest is spot-on.

Loud, fast, spazzy hardcore with synthesizers and all. BATALJ actually sounds almost exactly like SUCKINIM. The more I listen to this, I get the feeling that the three songs here were recorded with all the members of both bands on each song. If that is the case, it's a pretty interesting way of doing a split record. Then again, I could be completely wrong and each band sounds exactly like each other. I think I'm just confusing the shit outta myself now. Bottom line: if you like the LOCUST or the ORCHID, you will most certainly be into these bands. (BD)
(Twintoe)

THE BEECHWOODS – "It's Party Time/Beechwood Beat"

Schooled, pro-sounding '60s garage from the Pacific Northwest. "It's Party Time" is a fun frat-rocker, but lacks danger. In lieu of danger, I'd settle for gusto…and even that is hard to fish outta this. Can you even listen to UNTAMED YOUTH on an iPod? Is that sort of thing allowed? I dunno, fellas. "Beechwood Beat" is a surf-y instrumental, pure in its intent and executed cleanly. Oddly, I prefer this tune, if only because it's rare that I even hear this sort of thing done outside of the handful of 50-year-old local goofs that perfected the first rehash of this shit 20-plus years ago. If I'm ever drunk in a tiki bar while this band is playing, which is entirely possible, my opinion of this record just might change. Until then, get fucked. (MC)
(Double Crown)

THE BLACK TIE OPERATION – CD

Ugh. Hearing this disc makes me think of a band that is rather popular in their hometown (cuz there are no other bands), then they go on tour (in the summer) and everyone is bummed except them. They're aiming at a kind of heartfelt and poppy hardcore—the singer sounds a bit like Lance Hahn—but they don't do enough within that formula. They're not totally terrible, but it starts to seem that way on a sixteen-song CD when the band does not make a virtue of getting to the point. But they included no contact info so hopefully you'll never come across one. (JM)
(no info)

BRICK MOWER – "Under the Sink" CD

This is some very melodic pop punk from New Jersey. Not bad. At times they have a CARRIE NATIONS vibe, which is awesome. But most other times they sound like PAVEMENT with a punk a punk edge. The CD starts off with kind of an emo feel, but loses that later in the album. The last few tracks are the best ones. One thing that does suck though is the artwork and liner notes. It just seems like it was a total after thought. Come on guys you have two labels co-releasing your CD, between all you all, someone must know how to layout artwork without it looking super pixilated. Album art is an aspect of a band's self-expression, don't get lazy on us. This would have made for a fantastic 7 inch if it were just the last three songs. (FS)
(Viking On Campus)

BRICKWAR – "Warpath" EP

Shitty black-and-white cover had me thinking this was some sub-par hardcore shit. I am blindsided by a double-EP of dark, moody punk from fuck knows where. On one of the discs they sound like a mix of RADIO BIRDMAN, AGENT ORANGE and the SPITS… less stellar than those legends but pretty bangin'. The other EP sounds like a different band, kinda blues punk… Game of two halves. (TB)
(Savage)

BROKEN MOUNTAIN / SHANG-A-LANG – split EP

BROKEN MOUNTAIN is a Japanese band that plays rock'n'roll-y, garage-y, and poppy punk. It's an interesting sound, full of guitar solos and just a little fuzz. All of their songs are about distance from other people, either by choice or not being able to relate. SHANG-A-LANG, on the other hand, play straightforward dude-ly pop-punk (as you well know). These songs are about (in order of appearance) not wanting to grow up, other people being jerks, and the world not being the way you want it. There are a ton of bands in this country doing this right now, but I guess these guys are one of the more notable of the crew? Whatever. (LP)
(Dirt Cult / Snuffy Smiles)

BUCKET FLUSH – "Peeping Tom" EP

Wow. I don't know shit about BUCKET FLUSH but this brand new EP fuckin' rules. I seriously thought this was some unreleased material from the early '80s, but apparently these Philly aficionados just did their homework and somehow captured that now-elusive raw '80s basement sound in the studio, ProTools be damned. They're emulating a different sound than I'm used to being rehashed—that '82-83 punk/melodic hardcore sound akin to Canada's SUBHUMANS, SoCal slaves D.I., even a little ZERO BOYS. Thankfully they go beyond just emulation with four solid tracks that easily stand up on their own. Hand-numbered out of 500 copies. Keep it up, guys! (GB)
(Eaglebauer Enterprises)

BURNING SENSATION – LP

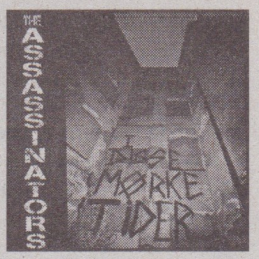
This listens like some obscure melodic hardcore demo from '83 seeing vinyl treatment for the first time, after being given a proper mastering job—possibly due to the rich guitar tone and slightly hazy/dreamy recording. Most of this record is furious, speedy hardcore that incorporates earnest melody the same way that HÜSKER DÜ did on their *Land Speed Record* material. The slower songs on here offer up bleak but defiant melodies, while the song "I Wonder" sounds like what the terms "alternative rock" or "college rock" originally described. It doesn't seem to me like these songs necessarily flow as an album, but they're eclectic and varied enough that the LP holds my interest all the way through. (DG)
(Vertex)

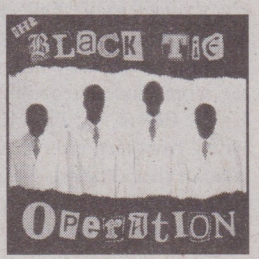
BLACK FEET – CD

A band from Sweden that features gals from DISCO VALANTE, whose CD I liked a couple years back, and members of BRUCE BANNER. A mix of punk, post-punk and garage. Not quite as rock as DISCO VALANTE but this still kicks ass. Don't call them a girl-group (they're not completely female FYI), just a cool mix of IGGY and SIOUXSIE gone astray. (RL)
(Dirty Faces)

BYRDS OF PARADISE – "Teenage Symphonies" LP

I don't care if it's "lo fi" or it's "punk" or it's "indie rock" or you call your band the "BYRDS OF PARADISE," I don't care *what* you do—if the end result sounds like this (i.e. NIRVANA) then you're wasting my time. I spent about five minutes trying to think of one positive thing I could say about this LP, and then I realized that *MRR* keeps it so I never will hear it, nor think of it again, and that's fine with me. Maybe they should've sent this to someone else to review (like a deaf person). Oh, also this record comes with a glossy poster of a rug if anyone likes dumb bullshit for nerds. (BB)
(Don Giovanni)





CADDY – "Electric Hero" CD

So this is one for the power pop crowd. CADDY features someone from the legendary YUM YUMS, who apparently now drums for TURBONEGRO as well. A one-man band that doesn't include a picture to put a face to the voice. This isn't thin sounding skinny tie music; it's well-produced pop with hooks, good vocals and guitar muscle when needed. Not quite up to the level of the YUM YUMS, but just a short step away. (RL)
(Diner Junkie)

CAPTAIN, WE'RE SINKING – "With Joe Riley" EP

Upon first glance at this record's cover, I half-expected it to be some sappy emo with overly whiney vocals. I guess some of the lyrics would qualify as being emotional, however I wouldn't really delegate this to the emo section. The music at times reminds me of maybe a bit more spastic version of LATTERMAN, other times it's more straightforward melodic punk with a steady beat. I can totally appreciate the lack of Jeff Ott-style vocals that so often accompanies this type of music. The no-frills "clean" vocals these guys employ go quite nicely with the music they play. (BD)
(Evil Weevil)

CENOBITES – "No Paradise for the Damned" CD

Anything called "CENOBITES" poses the question of whether even to open the CD case to begin with... Risking it, you'll find that this veteran Dutch band has been at the forefront of the psychobilly movement since 1994, but this third record mainly brings to mind METALLICA?? The rhythm section plucks and pounds and shuffles the eleven tracks with enough rockabilly ferocity, but the sung/shouted James Hetfield-ness of the vocals really point this in a different direction. There's some total old dusty rock'n'roll 45 style breakdowns and slide guitar, but just as many chugging metallic riffs and rocked-out solos as it whirls towards its end, where it caps the madness with GG ALLIN and VENOM covers. Solid throughout, it's like *Ride the Lightning* played by the METEORS or something with horror-drenched lyrics. (KS)
(Rebellion)

CHALK CIRCLE – "Reflection" LP

Mississippi Records (also busy reissuing out-of-print punk heroines like KLEENEX and CHIN CHIN) and Los Angeles's PPM team up to re-release one of the truly great triumphs in early punk by teenage girls, CHALK CIRCLE. Side by side with the happenings of late-'70s/early-'80s DC, invoking images of endless pools of sweaty, buzzed, bald white heads, CHALK CIRCLE injects an important chapter in the history of the city's punk legacy. "Reflection," "The Slap," "Subversive Pleasure" and "Uneasy Friend" crash with a wild joy even more necessary 30 years on. Even the more modest recording qualities of "Turning Up the Collar" or "Easy Escapes" exude fun only wrung from teen girls inspired by BAD BRAINS. Nerds exhale, the reissue is complete with an essential booklet featuring photos, detailed history of the band and its place in the early days of the DC scene, interview, a diary entry and choice photos of the DC scene by member Sharon Cheslow. (Reminder: it's worth digging out that old *MRR* with Layla's interview with Cheslow for a way better context than I could ever sketch in a record review!) An amazing history, aural artifact, a must-have on your list at the record shop, and no lagging cuz you know how fast Mississippis go. (JS)
(Mississippi / PPM)

CHAOS DESTROY – "Be Noise" EP

Like superheroes, these normal-seeming young men from mild-mannered Severna Park (Maryland) occasionally creep from their lair at night to assume their secret identity: CHAOS DESTROY! The sloppiest, noiziest, most feral punx to ever huff glue and pee in your living room. (Disclaimer: I don't know that they've ever actually done either of those things.) This new EP is definitely more structured than their earlier material in that there are barely discernable guitar riffs throughout, but this is still led by fuzz bass, clattering drums and incoherent yelps and shrieks that recall the most primitive work of noize punk pioneers GAI. If you broke your copy of the *Pinch and Ouch* LP into a million pieces, glued it back together and played it with a rusty nail through a blown out speaker... you'd have this. (AU)
(Noise Punk)

CITIZEN FISH – "Goods" LP

CITIZEN FISH were ska-punk before it was cool, they were ska-punk when it was cool, and 20 years on, they are *still* dishing out brilliantly crafted political ska-punk. Dick's lyrics have not been this biting and spot-on in fukkn years, and if these tunes don't make you want to dance, then you might want to have your pulse checked. The '80s vibe that was sneaking into 2007's *Deadline* split is front and center here in songs like "Marker Pen," "Overseas" and "Insane," and the horns take as many leads as the guitars. The happily drunk rock steady swagger of "Fearless" combines with the song's very serious lyrical approach—it's the very essence of what makes this band great: just because the world is fukkd doesn't mean we shouldn't have a party while we are trying to make it better. The CITIZEN FISH discography is excellent, and their sound is totally unique even while staying basically within the confines of ska/punk, but *Goods* shines even in the context of their previous work. I will be listening to this one a lot. (WN)
(Alternative Tentacles)

COKSKAR / SCAPHE – split EP

Wow. This split is pretty brutal. The COKSKAR side is a chaotic blastbeat grind-y fuck you assault, with some thrash-y metallic guitars and some killer floorpunch-y breakdown. If I am not mistaken I don't hear a bass here, but it's not missed. Mostly this is grind-y as shit. The lyrics are awesome. The song "Brownie Points" is The. Fucking. Best. The vocalist's growls are mean, throaty and aggressive yet do not lose the fact that this is a woman belting out this hate. No, they do not sound like SPITBOY. I have to admit that seeing this band play with EUNUCH would be one of my dream shows. Their side ends with the word "Chump!" screamed on repeat until you flip the record. Haha! SCAPHE's tracks aren't as fast throughout. There are vocals with some back up here that have that throaty, deep yet scream-y quality that I love along with some guttural growling. The music is pretty chaotic and driving with some interesting changes. Both basses (no guitars here, people, they don't need 'em) are heart stopping with no apprehension to use every inch of the instrument's neck and the drums are a fucking beautiful mess. There are some straight up sludgy parts with heavy crust vocals and parts that delve deep into grindcore territory. Both sides have an underlying buzz of experimentation going on, but what rises to the surface is the anger and the maniacal urge to rage hard. If you like blastbeat, grind and doomy sludge stuff, this is the record for you. Luckily, this is right up my alley. (MB)
(Inside Music Lesson)

CORE BALL – CD

I was sincerely hoping this would be one big riff on the violent '70s sci-fi film *Rollerball*, starring James Caan. But no, what we have here is fairly standard fast Polish punk with slightly metallic riffs and two sets of vocals, one of which is sung/screamed and the other barked/growled. There's really nothing bad to be said about this, but there's equally little to set it apart from the clutch of generic stuff that comes into *MRR* each month. (JH)
(Pasazer)

THE CORPS – "Bottle of Rock'n'Roll" CD

Seven tunes, two covers—MOTÖRHEAD's "Ace of Spades" and ROSE TATTOO's "Nice Boys." Straight-up rock mixed with straight-up street-punk, played well, loud, safe and tight. If you dig what I just wrote, then you will dig this CD. (SD)
(Rebellion)

COWABUNGA BABES / WOAH HUNX – split 7"

Winner for stupidest band names of the month on one 7"?! WOAH HUNX play bratty sorta surfy punk pop, emphasis on the punk. It's shambolic and goofy, total party music, for some reason it made me think of a lighter hearted WHITE LUNG. Katherine has a cool bratty/tough voice that's somewhere between Allison of BRATMOBILE and Mish of White Lung... As far as I can tell this was recorded by Katy of VIVIAN GIRLS if that matters to ya. "Smells Like Shit" is the jam. The COWABUNGA BABES are a fuzzier sleepier version of the above; take out the perkiness, and the punkiness. I like it, but it veers more towards indie rock. Both bands have girls in 'em, and despite the weird Pitchfork vibe this is a pretty rad record. Probably more of a Burger records vibration in all actuality. (LG)
(self-released)

CRACKBOX – "In Love Must Mean Stupid" EP

This record is insanely good! It's dirty, bleak, gross, and catchy, all rolled up in one gleaming, four-song EP. This is another beautiful slice of the newly minted sub-genre of "crust-pop." I know

many of you will grimace at this seemingly awkward melding of worlds, 'cause they seem like oil and water. But in fact, this does rule. Generally, music like this comes out of kids once connected to the pop punk scene. But as you grow older you realize that life is shit, and it's less about freedom and choice; and more about loss and grief. And that gets reflected in their message, but creating music is still a vehicle towards personal happiness, so the pop sensibilities at times find their way in. OK, so I don't know these guys at all. That description could be really fucking far from their reality, but that's the atmosphere the music gives. And that's the sense the vocals convey as they weave back and forth from guttural to soaring. At times, she sounds like a fucking monster—it rules. This record is highly recommended, especially if you're into SNUGGLE, GLUE or FILTH. Destroy everything! (FS)
(self-released)

CREEPOUT / INTEGRITY – split EP

This my first CREEPOUT experience and it's quite a pleasant surprise. From their logo in the INTEGRITY/Schism font and their adaptation on the (now-iconic) INTEGRITY skull on the back cover, I expected a full-on submission to the altar of the Dark Empire cult and Holy Terror Church of Final Judgment, but I was rewarded with something slightly different. The three tunes that they contribute to this split are some of the better post-*Set It Off* NYHC-styled joints I've heard in a long time. The flow isn't all-chug-no-go and more often than not is charging ahead at a pretty good clip, occasionally pulling over to let the kids shout along and dance. Kunihyde's gnarly vocals sit somewhere between BLOOD FOR BLOOD and BASTARD or JABARA—and I'm not simply just throwing out Japanese hardcore bands, the vocals really sound like that—barking out lyrics about personal struggle and other stuff (that isn't printed). On to the flip... As someone who considers '90s-era INTEGRITY some of the greatest music ever, I have a hard time identifying this current clan of Dwid and company as "INTEGRITY" but that's the way the cookie crumbles, so... With that said, I still enjoy the records they produce. A lot of other longtime fans considered *The Blackest Curse* phoned in and uninspired, but I liked it...a lot...and just think of it as another era of a great band. I will say that Dwid's voice is starting to show its age, but that is something else all together. The music here is a much more lo-fi and raw sound than anything I've heard from them yet, which is a huge plus. I can't quite tell if there is one song here or two (I'm leaning towards two), but the first two or three minutes are more plodding and doom-y, and when the wanking leads and solos are happening it sounds like such a mess in a really perfect way. The second act is more in the classic-structured mid-to-fast-paced riffing and chord progressions of what you most likely associate as INTEGRITY, albeit leaning more towards some of the kvlt [black] metal trappings that have seeped in more and more with time. Another worthwhile release from a label that knows what they like and fully immerse themselves in it, and you gotta respect that. (JU)
(A389)

CÜLO – "Toxic Vision" EP

Keeping with the momentum these lil shits from Chicago started with their first two releases, *Toxic Vision* picks up where *Military Trend* left off. The four songs on this EP rip hard. Yes, there are early East Coast/DC punk influences with mostly fast as hell Midwest style hardcore and the chaos that ensues from their vocalists angry throaty bark is nasty as shit. That kid is fucked up. Every element to a good punk record is here. Each song is different, but never loses the sound of the band. The lyrics are nihilistic, desperate and full of rage. The recording is not over done but is clean enough to hear the mess that is going on. They don't sound like some generic throwback of a legendary band, without the balls; this is aggressive. This is the sound of punks who don't give a fuck about what came before or what is going to happen after. Also, I am elated to see a dick in the liner notes, because a CÜLO release wouldn't be complete with out it... I wonder if "Wasted on Wine" is about one of their moms? This record rules. (MB)
(Deranged)

DAN CUNNEEN – "The Answer/Shoot & Share!"

DAN CUNNEEN has an interesting musical history: FINAL WARNING, LEW JONES, OBITUARIES, ZIPGUN, NIGHTCAPS and RAT CITY BRASS. He played drums for all those bands. Now he breaks onto the one-man-band scene playing guitar, bass, drums and singing on this 7". CUNNEEN sings (I hope sarcastically) about drugs: smokin' pot on side A, shooting dope on side B. He comes off as a punk version of the pop country singer, falling somewhere between TOBY KEITH and GARTH BROOKS. CUNNEEN's a bit edgier, but I could easily see both of those guys singing "The Answer." (CK)
(Rendezvous)

DAVILA 666 – "Tan Bajo" LP

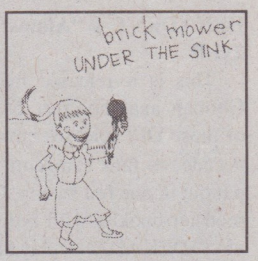
The music of DAVILA 666 is the result of mixing relative geographic isolation and a diverse cultural heritage with the love of rock and roll. What you get is something quite original and interesting. The music fits in snuggly with the whole Douche Master lo-fi garage pop approach, but the Spanish lyrics, stylistic variations and occasional psychedelic overtones distinguish this band from the pack. Some tunes carry a melodic garage sound like early WELLWATER CONSPIRACY, but others are raw and upbeat like a primitive CRAMPS recording. A trippy ambience sporadically weaves its way through the album as well, bringing to mind SPACEMEN 3 or the JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, yet the crashing percussion (both drumming and tambourine) keeps the songs from drifting off too far. I admit to having missed out on hearing the debut LP a few years ago, but if it's anything like this fantastic album, I need to get on it! (BG)
(In the Red)

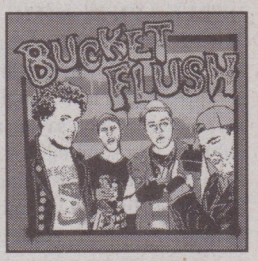
DAWN OF HUMANS – "Head Process" EP

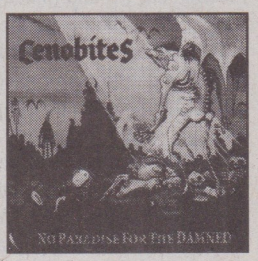
Don't know nuthin' about this band. Not even an A- or B-side. Killer screened cover of some Bigfoot-looking motherfucker with a face on his belly and crotch with UFOs and shit shooting at him. Starts off with a raging hardcore song (if I got the right side) then goes into a slower grinding number. I really like the singer's snarly, testicles-in-a-blender sound. This is kinda like the ACCÜSED at times. There are more fast songs on the other side and these songs have a little artiness at times, but good fucking shit. (RO)
(Toxic State)

DEEP SLEEP – "Turn Me Off" LP

If you're familiar with this Baltimore four-piece, who have previously released three EPs on Grave Mistake, no doubt you'll have picked up on their affinity for the pop of MEGA CITY FOUR, the hooks of the DESCENDENTS and the youthful aggression of classic Orange County hardcore punk bands of yore. This record continues to merge those influences, while displaying some creative new moves that keep things fresh. While I'm not crazy about everything on here, there's no doubt that DEEP SLEEP does it well, and I give them credit for recognizing what countless hardcore punk bands of the last few years seem to have missed: writing a catchy song. (JH)
(Grave Mistake)







DEKADENT – "Almost Complete Dekadent" 2xLP

This is re-released material from the notable German anarcho-crust band DEKADENT. A lot of those DIY releases have been unavailable for a decade, so fans can score almost everything they put out in one fell swoop. Comes with a poster and monster booklet with lyrics (in German) and pictures. DEKADENT played a female-fronted brand of crust that is a bit more melodic than some of their counterparts on the continent—more of a UK sound from the post-CRASS era. Something to listen to while studding up your vest. (BL)
(Twisted Chords)

DEMON'S CLAWS – "Laserbeams/Trip to the Clinic"

Two songs from DEMON'S CLAWS' latest album *The Defrosting Of...* Not sure why you'd really need this 7". These are peppy, punky garage songs. It is just not too exciting. It needs something. (CK)
(Savage)

DEREK LYN PLASTIC – "Wombat Juice"EP

Ohhhhh, DEREK. Me and Mr. PLASTIC go way back, ya see. During my first tenure here at *MRR*, I reviewed one of his 7" singles. Sure, I thought I gave it a passable review, saying nothing overtly negative, but (as I was soon told) it was clearly not positive enough. It lacked recognition of this artist's genius, his zest for life and his unbelievable talent (so I've been told...by him). I clearly had him pegged wrong as a minor league new wave genre goon. What can I say? I was but a mere guppy then, adrift in a sea of records that I found (*much*) more value in than his lowly effort. Blame the moon, DEREK. Blame the stars, for it is they who guide my hand. Anyway, the review in question prompted Mr. PLASTIC to go on a message board and MySpace blitz, outing me as fat, ugly virgin loser with *huuuuuge* man-tits who lives with his mother. Moreover, there was insinuation that I also fuck my mother *and* suck the cock of one (now deceased) JAY REATARD, both of which would negate the virginity aspect of his gripe. Well, wait a sec...would oral *and* incest actually rank as virginity-stripping occurrences? I'm inclined to say that they do, but I've been wrong before. Right, DEREK? Anyway, thanks to him, I've made some positive changes in my life. Now I'm slim and trim, living in my own apartment and, if you'll indulge me for a second, have access to an amazing harem of beautiful, intelligent women who grant me access to their vaginas on what may as well be a round-the-clock schedule. My mom isn't even one of them! And you know what? DEREK LYN PLASTIC records are still really, really fucking boring. (MC)
(NMG Worldwide)

DEZERTER – "Prawo Do Bycia Idiota" LP

After almost 30 years and more than a dozen releases, DEZERTER should be well known to the readers of this fine rag. One of Poland's first punk bands, and certainly the first to receive attention outside of the Eastern Bloc, they are still punks and are still making solid records. *Prawo Do Bycia Idiota* is a professional beast, with perfectly commercial production and songs that will appeal just as easily (perhaps more?) to mainstream punks as to underground punks, but the songs are *good*, and the lyrics are spot-on political (and personal-as-political) commentaries from a band whose existence has spanned more than enough time to give them the authority to comment. Listening to the songs, reading the lyrics, looking at the presentation, I keep thinking that this might be DEZERTER's *American Idiot*, perhaps not mandatory for the punks, but an excellent record that will likely open very important doors for a new generation. (WN)
(Pasazer)

DEZERTER – "Nielegalny Zabójca Czasu" LP

This, the twelfth studio full-length the band released, originally came out on CD in 2004. These tracks are pretty straightforward, driving (or mid-tempo) hardcore with crisp guitars, full and busy bass, and melodic yelling. Some of this isn't too far off from early JAWBREAKER. I do prefer the faster tracks like "Ulica Bankowa," with its angry gang chorus. While not every song on here works for me, the majority is rocking pretty strong. The lyrics are sung in Polish and English with translations provided. Since 1981, these folks have been attacking society and trying to keep some hope, and these themes continue here. If you've been waiting to try a DEZERTER LP, this one would be a fine choice. (JM)
(Pasazer)

DIARRHEA PLANET – "Aloha" EP

There's so much to be annoyed with regarding this record. The name, the song titles, the fact that all of the titles end with exclamation points—all of these things gave me pause. Then, digging in, I got to ladle some disappointment on top of my annoyance. These dudes really go whole hog for the cutesy thing. There's not a trace of negativity anywhere that I can hear, and not enough interesting stuff to carry the record. Which is a shame, because the group is kind of like UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND meets some pop band like, for example, BEST COAST. I know, it's not the best sounding combo, but it makes for OK dance tunes. If only everything else about the record didn't bum me out. (LP)
(Evil Weevil)

DISPLEASE – "Think!" CD

Yeah, yeah, another DIS-band, and frankly one that I (for once) have mixed feelings about. On one hand, the material is delivered with great urgency and passion. On the other, I'm five songs in and I have yet to hear one that doesn't have a riff I recognize from another band's song. I'm all for wearing your influences on your sleeve and all, but wholesale riff farming on this scale is pretty fucking shoddy. Plus the drums are triggered or otherwise studio-magicked and that just sucks. C'mon, it's just fucking D-beat, it definitely doesn't need studio blasts. (AU)
(Old Hat)

THE DITCH – "Brothers" EP

Aaagh! How many more zombie record covers does the world need? None, but if you're still craving more, the DITCH is here to hook you up. Although strangely, when you pop on the record, it's ultra mega generic French youth crew singing about tolerance, respect, friendship and all the other things you learned in kindergarten. I would truly rather have my flesh eaten alive than listen to another minute of this nonsense. (JH)
(Crapoulet / Guerilla / Slow Death / Falling Down / NBT)

DOPAMINES – "Expect the Worst" CD

This band from Ohio has a melodic DILLINGER FOUR and BANNER PILOT thing going on. This trio is decent here as this has its moments but it never quite takes off like D4. I thought I would be more into this based on the sound, but I wasn't after repeated listenings. Oh well. (RL)
(Paper and Plastic)

DOWNFALL OF GAIA – "Epos" LP

These Krauts play a fairly crushing flavor of screamo-crust. The guitars spend a lot of time plucking out echoing atmospheric parts that are smashed by slow and heavy hardcore parts. The drums are sometimes tribal and the bass is thundering. The packaging even includes explanations of the German lyrics in English. This band is doing a lot of things the way I like them done. (BL)
(Shove, Maniyax / Alerta Antifascista)

DSM-5 – "Metanoia" CD

This Spanish band plays heavy rock with a slight metal tinge to it. There's a slight MOTÖRHEAD sound coming through in the guitar, but it's not very obvious. The lady vocals are very gutturral, yet not gruff or growly. They were kind enough to provide (albeit spotty) English translations of the song titles and words. As grammatically off as they are, it's enough to get the point across. (BD)
(Ruido Sonoro / Cryptas)

DUSTED ANGEL – "Earth Sick Mind" CD

Howling stoner rock... This sounds awesome, as in it was recorded perfectly, but I fear that the meandering psychedelic grooves will likely turn off most who peruse these pages. Gruff but melodic vocals à la KYUSS (the whole vibe isn't that far off) and riffing that is far superior to most of the genre—file this under "if you're into this sort of thing," but more enthusiastic than that caveat typically implies. My point is, if you *are* into this thing, then you will *really* be into DUSTED ANGEL. (WN)
(Mankind)

ELDERS – "Blind Rage" LP

These guys played here a few months ago and I missed most of the set due to social anxiety forcing me out of the crowded bar and on to the sidewalk outside. I was bummed then, and more bummed now. This is the perfect soundtrack to feelings of isolation from and disgust with the scum surrounding you at every waking moment in this disgusting shithole of a city. Not even close to the mysterioso shit the name led me to believe, this is menacing hardcore with a decent balance between the stomping aggro parts and faster shit. Nice snarling vocals that remind me of a less-guttural later-era GG ALLIN. If these dudes play near you, don't blow it like

me. (AH)
(King of the Monsters)

ELECTROPHONIC – "Heatseekin'" EP

Clichéd rock'n'roll from the new radioactive capital of the world. Ain't gonna win no originality awards with its dated take on a tried, tired and tested formula. It's just all too '90s for this forward-thinking go-getter, reminiscent of the days when every hair-bear wanted to sound just like the MC5. (SD)
(Hard Stopping)

EVERYTHING WENT BLACK / RATTLETOOTH – split EP

Both bands on this split play slow, brutal hardcore that is all detuned and doomed out. Kind of like CONVERGE or if you listened to INTEGRITY 7"s on 33 RPM. I think I like RATTLETOOTH a little more as their bass is mixed high and has a more blasted out, distorted sound. EVERYTHING WENT BLACK sounds a little more like a traditional hardcore band and they incorporate higher-pitched guitar leads for a more layered sound. Both are highly recommended. (BL)
(I Hate Punk Rock)

FOLDED SHIRT – LP

This record is fine, although the lyrics seem to have been written in an effort to make me (and anyone else listening) understand just how stupid everyone in the band is. Sounds like TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS, but instead of a badass gothic violence princess they seem generous enough to keep the singer on even though he's the inbred child of Gibby Haynes and John Frusciante circa 1997. That's nice, I guess. I'd like it better if it weren't so dumb, though. (HD)
(Fashionable Idiots)

FOREIGN OBJECTS – "A Kind of Life/The Key"

This record rules! Two anthemic punk songs that complement each other perfectly. This is the right way to do a single. Side A is a total scorcher, while the B-side is slower and grittier but just as crucial. FOREIGN OBJECTS play a fast and dirty brand of melodic punk in the vein of AVENGERS or Albany's NUCLEAR FAMILY. The B-side track is slightly different than most songs they've recorded—it has the musical and emotional feel of a *Reject All American*-era BIKINI KILL song. But their bread and butter is well represented by the A-side: buzzsaw guitars, soaring vocals and catchy as hell. This record will leave you needing more. (FS)
(Dirt Cult)

FÖRMÖGENHET – "Nej Tack Jag Tål Inte Mjölk" 2xEP

These dudes haven't received the recognition they deserve yet, so hopefully this new release (sixteen tracks spread across two 7"s, making this more a full-length album than an EP) will do the trick. I dug their first record from a few years ago but this one is way better. FÖRMÖGENHET play straight-up, energetic hardcore with a dose of early Swedish punk rock influence and a twist of humor. Some songs get a bit sloppy at times, but the killer guitar riffs, rapid drum blasts and powerfully screamed vocals keep the energy high regardless. So while this might not exactly give you chills up your back or anything, it's still a damn good hardcore record totally worth checking out. (BG)
(Henke Bolla)

FREEDUMB – "The Freedumb Curse" CD

There are a few bands out there called FREEDUMB, but this one is from Norway. They play faster '80s punk in the vein of POISON IDEA, but with a strong thrash metal influence in the guitar riffage. I'm pretty lukewarm on thrash crossover bands, but in this case the thrash wank actually adds a lot of depth to the band and I found myself nodding my head to their songs. I'd have a beer with these dudes. (BL)
(no info)

FRESH TRASH – "La Jungla" LP

The cover's got lots of stoned monkeys getting wild, pissing, skating and fucking shit up with a real pig coming down on them and ruining their buzz. Kinda metallic hardcore mostly in Spanish and English. Songs about weed, cops, etc... I like a good toke on the hippy shit but this just gives me a headache like bad dirt weed. The song "Ice Cream" (Yeah. Actually like I scream, you scream...) is the absolute worst. Maybe if I smoke the free copy I'll get a good high and like this better. Don't think so. (RO)
(Sell Our Souls)

GETTING EVEN – "End Credits" EP

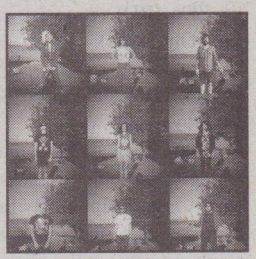
Another new band having a go with the Ginn or Stevenson-Neider guitar style, this time coming from Minneapolis' GETTING EVEN, who sport folks from HOLDING ON and THE REAL ENEMY. Calling this BL'AST/FLAG-influenced is quite misleading for the fact that musically, it is like a straight up tribute. Not that it's all, like, stolen riffs or anything, but the pacing, the changes, the drumming, the vocals, and the scales are like a *Power of Expression* Cliff Notes session. At first I was just thinking it sounded "similar" but I did a couple random A/B needle drops on this 7" and the *Power of Expression* LP, and the only thing that differentiated the two in these fifteen-second-segments was the production/recording and vocal deviation that was still similar. If that's the sound you are looking for, this record is for you. Quality stuff. (JU)
(One Percent / Pass Judgment / Rock Bottom)

GLI ULTIMI – "Questi Anni" CD

For real, every month, some BOUNCING SOULS/NOFX-boner-having CD from Europe? (GG)
(Laïda Provincia)

GLUEAMS – "Discography" LP

Absolutely beautifully packaged collection of the 7"s of this *essential* Swiss punk band, plus a remastered but still raw live set. Fierce female vocals over artfully constructed yet raging punk that's somewhere between JACK AND THE RIPPERS and the LOST KIDS and TNT (the Swiss one)!!! Dorette's vocals are less schreechy than POLY SYRENE and less arch than KLEENEX, but have this raucous sexy quality to them that brings to mind LOST KIDS. Put all of that in your percolator punker. The music is basic, sorta brutish in places but anthemic and catchier than scabies. It's hard not to dance to this shit!) "365" is a dance party floor filler, "Mental" is a triumphant anthem; perfect for soundtracking another crappy day in the real world. The "lead" guitar part sounds weirdly intricate and repetitive, yet moronic like an Atari style '80s computer game. "Strassen" has this swagger to it, the vocals less exuberant than on the first 7", then a paint-by-numbers guitar solo comes in and dislodges your brain cells. The live stuff is cool, but after listening to the punk perfection of the first two seven inches it's not quite as compelling. Though it does add to the rest of the package... The cover has this crazy picture of Dorette under a weird foil covered burning cross, it gives it a dark pagan look rather than anything else though. Released in part by the people who did the amazing *Hot Love* book on Swiss punk that you gotta check out if you haven't already, it's the size of a phone book and probably one of the coolest documents of an early punk scene I have seen. (LG)
(Swisspunk / Static Shock Music)



GOVERNMENT WARNING – "No Moderation" LP

This is another press of this killer LP picked up this time by Grave Mistake Records. For those who don't know, GOVERNMENT WARNING plays fast hardcore punk with loads of snottiness, delivered with precision and punch. They have done multiple tours and usually get kids going crazy at all their shows. High-energy music and fun to see live; if you never got this LP before, now is your chance. (MS)
(Grave Mistake)

THE GUNDOWN – "Endless Loads of Rage" LP

I always feel like a jerk when I give ho-hum reviews to bands like this. By "bands like this," I'm talking about the ones that sound like every other one that loves LEATHERFACE, JAWBREAKER, REPLACEMENTS, et al. This stuff gets done to death to the point where I have to wonder why so many bands want to sound like all the others. Don't get me wrong, these guys aren't bad and there are couple pretty catchy tunes here, but this music doesn't make an impression these days the way it would have in the '90s. (BD)
(Sell Our Souls)

HARRINGTON SAINTS – "Machine Guns and Molotovs" EP

These guys are huge and I can see why after listening to these three tracks. Each tune is total high energy and exceptionally catchy with lots of shouted choruses that undoubtedly result in intense singalong moments at live shows. I imagine a sea of fists punching high in the air as recurring working class anthems create a festive atmosphere of camaraderie and purpose. But I still have a mixed view on the music. On the one hand, even though I dig a lot of traditional Oi and street punk, the new generation of bands that HARRINGTON SAINTS represent is usually too formulaic and clean sounding; too many songs are anthems and it can get tedious after a while. Rather than, say, the TEMPLARS or BLITZ, the music reminds me more of the DROPKICK MURPHYS or maybe even later-period AGNOSTIC FRONT when they were doing the street-punk crossover thing. I know a lot of people love this type of music, but I wanted to mention the distinction for those out there who don't. But with that said, I don't think anyone can do it as well as these dudes—their song writing is near perfection and they sure sound tight. So what's my problem? (BG)
(Longshot)

HERDS – "Michigan" EP

It's my first time hearing Milwaukee/Chicago's HERDS and by the end of song one I'm already impressed with their brooding and dark brand of hardcore. The first track, "Iron Mountain," establishes the heavy, desolate tone of things to come before launching into "Detroit"—a monster tune that brings to mind the crushing beginning of INTEGRITY's "Incarnate 365" without the big production and metal leads. Side B doesn't maintain quite the same intensity level as the A-side, but it's still pretty great. The whole affair is underpinned by grim lyrics about natural disasters and the collapse of the American dream in the state of Michigan. If you like your hardcore doom-y (or your doom minus the metal), this is essential. (JH)
(Residue)

HJERTESTOP – "Musik For Dekadente Orer" EP

Stop with the horrible pixilated art *pleaseeeeeee*. This band is pretty on the money with their fast and loose hardcore, like a mix of early CIRCLE JERKS with early FREEZE or somethin'. I mean it's great, but it's totally one of those records I'd buy and file away never to be listened to again. (TB)
(Fashionable Idiots)

HPP – "NMDB" EP

Real strong later FLAG feel here, evident in the rocking tempos, riffs and guitar leads. (The Ginnisms are most fully realized on "Sexual Tension" featuring guest axeman and TIGHT BRO Dave Harvey.) But it's an influence as opposed to a blueprint, as HPP have their own direction and aren't a mere tribute band. Can't say I care to follow along, really, but that's just one reporter's opinion… Like the rest of the stuff Perennial's released, this record has cool artwork and layout. (CS)
(Perennial)

IKNOW – "Robe, Kill" EP

Riveting hardcore from Belarus. At first glance, IKNOW's debut 7" (following two split CDs) offers perfunctory up-tempo AUS ROTTEN-ish hardcore with some progressive flourishes. But the female vocals are akin to the post-POST REGIMENT wake of a lot of current Polish hardcore bands like EYE FOR AN EYE or POGOTOWIE SEKSUALNE, where commanding, sharp sung and shouted female vocals take things a step further and drive the entire record. There are strong dual male vocals, and the music occasionally hints at the same rollicking swagger that the best of Eastern European hardcore delivers, but it's the searing heights that the female vocals bounces off of that make this a really unique record and good listen. Similarly tough political lyrics, sung in Russian and the six-track EP rounds out with a cover of '80s Russian underground rock legends KINO. (KS)
(Miravoice)

IMMORAL DISCIPLINE – "Complete Discipline" CD

Damn! This is fucking sick shit! I'm admittedly not the biggest fan of American Oi as compared to the more well known British Oi bands out there, but I am massively interested in the history of the evolution of punk and specifically skinhead and Oi music as much as anything. This CD, in addition to offering some killer hardcore punk and American-style Oi songs, has a great history of this band that enjoyed a brief run from 1987-89 in Washington, DC. As most of you readers will know, DC also spawned the likes of MINOR THREAT, SOA, BAD BRAINS, GOVERNMENT ISSUE and, of course, IRON CROSS. IMMORAL DISCIPLINE would have come along after all those aforementioned bands had pretty much peaked and called it a day. The influences heard in IMMORAL DISCIPLINE's sound stays true to that very specific DC hardcore style… This CD pretty much covers everything the band ever did, from demos and compilation appearances to some previously unreleased recordings and a live track to close the CD. For any fan of '80s hardcore and/or skinhead music, this is a great CD to pick up *and* the profits from this go towards one of four very worthy charities! (ML)
(DSI Archives)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT – "Pretty Totally" LP

Pretty sure this New Orleans band is no more; could be wrong. The internet provides ambiguous information. Anyway, they were around in the early part of the century, playing experimental jazz-prog punk (emphasis on the punk) in the vein of an obnoxious FLIPPER/MINUTEMEN crossover. This LP is the first time on vinyl for an album released on cassette in 2001. Previously, I was only familiar with their split LP with NUCLEAR FAMILY, which I reviewed favorably in these pages. *Pretty Totally* is hit or miss—the more direct, song-based tracks are excellent, but there are some meandering jams that I might have been able to do without. Still, worth it for the bangers. (AM)
(Unwucht)

THE IRRITONES / NAPOLEON DYNAMITE – split EP

IRRITONES are former HATE PINKS and play snotty doomed straight ahead punk infused with a lil *Bloodstains Across France* for added destruction. The first song is a dark jammer; you'll wanna ride your motorcycle straight into a wall. The second one is a disembodied rock'n'roll message from beyond. Simple unaffected punk rock is hard to play without coming across as either a bar rockin' choad or a simulation of an age gone past. Check this for an admirable attempt! NAPOLEAN DYNAMITE are the official stupid name award winner for my batch of reviews, which is a shame because they play cool FU hardcore punk, if you are a REGULATIONS fan you will dig this. It got the Martin Sorrondeguy seal of approval, which should mean something in this cold hard world. (LG)
(Crapulet)

SKIP JENSEN – "Spirit of the Ghost" LP

This is pleasant enough twangy country rock. I liked the roughness of the one-man band SKIP JENSEN. Now they are a three-piece and that fills out the sound nicely. Gently strummed and frantically picked guitars, and even some attempts at yodeling, playing catchy songs that lend easily to feet stomping. Yee-haw! (CK)
(Red Lounge)

JUNGLE FEVER – "Cryin' Blood" EP

Here's the debut EP from this San Diego three-piece. The female vocals, though high and teetering on cute overload, are complimented by a great, buzzing guitar sound. Two of the three tunes here are up-tempo and passable; the other is mid-tempo and veers too close to pop punk for my liking. Still, this is a totally decent first effort that doesn't having me ruling out their next offering. (MC)
(Windian)

KAKKA-HATA 77 / PERTTI KURIKAN MIMIPAIVAT – split EP

The three tracks by Finland's KAKKA-HATA 77 are fantastic garage-y '77 punk threaded around simple, catchy guitar riffs with melodic vocals and choruses. Even at its most abrasive, it's still danceable and pogo-ready. On the flip, three songs by PERTTI KURIKAN MIMIPAIVAT are similarly stripped-down '60s-by-way-of-'70s garage punk, but with more plodding, dumpy tempos and simple, gruff vocals, not as catchy but engaging enough that you'd still make your way back from the bar. Lyrics entirely in Finnish. Solid split on red vinyl! (KS)
(Airiston Punk Levyt)

K-HOLES – LP

Massive, drunken Nug Rock full-length from Hozac. The sound is cavernous and pretty cool for what it is; somehow they've made a saxophone inoffensively listenable. No doubt HoZac fans will eat this shit up. Side A is slow, meandering stuff à la mid-period SONIC YOUTH. B-side opens the muck up a bit, unveiling some unexpected twang, and then they throw the two standout tracks at you: aggro speed-punk basher "Speedy Greedy" followed by the shambling F-vox pop dirge "Step 'n' Fetch," finally getting my blood pumping. Honestly I would've preferred those two tracks on a mail-order 45, but whatever, I guess it's all a "concept." I'll be the first to admit, I certainly don't get nugged enough... (GB)
(HoZac)

THE KIDNAPPERS – "Will Protect You" LP

Sweet! A new record by the KIDNAPPERS from Germany! One of my favorite bands of the power pop/garage genre—sorta like if TEENGENERATE and FIRESTARTER were actually the same band!! It's been a long time since their last album came out on the legendary Rip-Off Records label, and these ten new songs pick up where that left off. Listening to this takes me back to almost a decade ago when there was a resurgence of really good bands like this dominating labels like Dirtnap, In The Red and more recently Shit Sandwich and Douche Master Records. (ML)
(Alien Snatch)

GG KING – "Day Turns Into Night/Drug Induced State"

GG getting to review GG! Aptly named *Two Pack Party Pack,* Side A is a wickedly catchy and tart power pop offering. Good stuff, instantly reminding me of the CARBONAS. I turn the sleeve over to see this is, in fact, a previously unrecorded CARBONAS song. Guess that'll explain that. Side B is a little more ambient. Distorted vocals and whirring keys replace the "ooh snap" factor of its neighbor with weirdness. Worth a listen, for side A alone. (GG)
(Red Lounge)

LEADERS / TOKYO SEX DESTRUCTION – split LP

An interesting split here; definitely a lot more polished than what we usually get through these doors. Spaniards TOKYO SEX DESTRUCTION play high-energy radio-ready garage in the vein of INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY or the HIVES, with a touch of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. On the flip, LEADERS, from Portland, Oregon (ex-FIREBALLS OF FREEDOM), deliver five tracks of synth-laden post-punk with obvious nods to TUBEWAY ARMY as well as some other new wave influences. I kind of wish both sides were a little less wel recorded; as it is, the clean production takes out some of the punch (as well as the punk). (AM)
(Red Lounge)

LEAD THE WAY – "And in Vengeance We Strike" CD

The UK band LEAD THE WAY offers up some upbeat, melodic hardcore much in the vein of STRIKE ANYWHERE, in the good, political lyrics, and early HOT WATER MUSIC, especially in the dual vocal attack, with an occasional nod to THIN LIZZY and their dueling guitar leads. It's well recorded and a fine listen, but after three or four songs, the ears get a little tired, hoping for a little variety or some wrench in the works. There's just not enough there to separate them from their peers. If you're a fan of this style I'm sure you'll enjoy this, just don't expect any new ground. (MD)
(Not Shy of the DIY)

LEFT IN RUINS – "Ensam Hatisk Psykstord" 10"

Returning with their most savage effort after a decade-long absence, Sweden's LEFT IN RUINS' fourteen tracks here amp up several notches—if not an entire dial—from their split with MRTVA BUDOUCNOST and 7" EP ten or so years ago. A totally excellent dose of brutality fueled by the nail-gun delivery of unrelenting throttling thrash, with only a few seconds to catch a breath in this 45 RPM onslaught, as it largely zig-zags through blastbeat tempo changes at high speed. A precise recording grounds this chaotic mayhem and keeps it from turning into a total blizzard of noise. It's the sloppy, slathering and most importantly super pissed off vocals, sung completely in Swedish, that pin it to classic Swedish hardcore brutality, as if you dumped one of the more raw-vocalled tracks off of the first *Really Fast* comps in a blender with INTENSE DEGREE and pulsed until you came up with short, curt bursts of something infinitely more severe. Not grind, not lumbering powerviolence, just pure speed and anger from members of WIDESPREAD BLOODSHED, SEWN SHUT, INTENSITY...but way, way more severe. Way more. Limited to 260 copies. (KS)
(Smrt)

LEFT LANE CRUISER – "Junkyard Speed Ball" CD

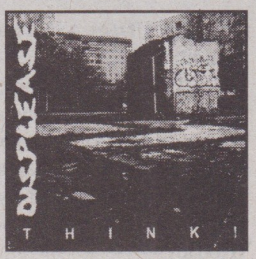
Full-on white trash, Southern rock type stuff here. If that's your bag, you'd probably like this. I, on the other hand, just don't get it. Yes, the guys can play. The singer's voice is pleasant enough. The occasional slide guitar is nice. But it's too bluesy without seeming actually authentic. Plus two songs about chain restaurants are too much for one album. (CK)
(Alive)

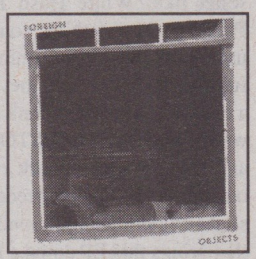
LITERATURE – "Cincinnati/It's Cruel"

Who does this sound like? This reminds me of who?? It's driving me nuts. It's power pop, that's what it is. And it reminds me of... GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN, that's who. Yes. I love a good, simple pop song and this is what I'm talking about. I wouldn't say that LITERATURE *sound* like GENTLEMAN JESSE, but they do *remind* me of GENTLEMAN JESSE. I need to get out and buy this one like right now. Excellent. (KK)
(Square of Opposition)

LOVER! – "Reverse the Curse" LP

A little too watery for GG's ears that very specifically know what's good for them. This record has somewhat of a soft focus about it, with classic pop stylings outweighing any shreds of more caustic garage rock by about 9876 lbs. Side two shapes up a little better, with more focused, defined and tuneful numbers that also display a higher quality of musicianship. Comparable to me dancing at a party or something, it starts off a bit awkward and unpromising, yet given time, warms up into something less inhibited and turns out to be quite good fun. (GG)
(Red Lounge)





LOVER! – "Home Alone/In Death"

I love LOVER. I love LOVER! Ever since that song they did about putting a booger in your asshole, I have been in love with LOVER! This is mid-tempo, melodic and as catchy as you can possibly get. And it's got this cool keyboard thing going on. At least I think it's a keyboard. Whatever it is, I love it. The A-side (in particular) reminds me of the SOUP DRAGONS back when they were good. Excellent. I love LOVER!! (KK)
(Windian)

THEE LUDDS – "Where to Begin/Skin and Bones"

THEE LUDDS play organ-lead garage rock. Their music is vivacious and catchy. It's part frat rock, part country jamboree. The vocals fall somewhere between a rockabilly drawl and John Dwyer's effects-smothered style. Mix that all together and you get two really fun songs. (CK)
(Hodad)

MACROCHORD – "Gorinkudaki" CD

This one is tough to cram into a few sentences, but the longer I try, the more I like the disc. Japan's MACROCHORD blazes through up-tempo burners with the intensity of the Japanese elite, but their tracks are packed with melody from the vocals and shrouded in high-end distortion from the guitars. It's blown-out crasher crust from the guitars, but super catchy rock from the songs. Country(wo)men SLEEPERS are similar, though Yumirin's vocals completely dominate that band and make the comparison seem odd, and the brief forays into '70s Japanese rock (BLUES CREATION, HIGH RISE, etc.) that come out of left field make MACROCHORD even harder to pin down, but I love it. (WN)
(Radio Underground)

MAGNUMS – "II" EP

If you dig exceedingly crude new wave garage that would make JAY REATARD smile in his tomb and the SPITS brothers stop fighting each other for a minute, than you might want to check out this boss four-track EP by Atlanta's MAGNUMS. With songs like "White Trash Treehouse" and "Trailer Park Witches" I think you can assume that nothing too serious is happening here, but that doesn't fucking matter 'cause they're all killer and evoke a late-'70s American punk sound falling within the weird wave of FREESTONE's "Bummer Bitch" and the raw guitar work of CHAIN GANG. The old-school influence predominates, but there's a slight modern garage sound as well. The only thing that brings this EP down a notch for me is a sloppy group-shouted chorus that fortunately can be heard only a couple of times. But we're talkin' just a notch down, 'cause this still ranks pretty high. And I should also add that this second EP towers over their first, so start off with this one. (BG)
(NMG)

MARK SPARKLES – "Pass" EP

Seattle's MARK SPARKLES is what I refer to as a "friends playing punk" band. It's the type of group that gets together with no clear musical vision, or even a cohesive idea of what the hell they're doing. You just base the band around whom your best friends are, rather than who you think would do the best job playing the instrument. One telltale sign of a "friends playing punk" band is: if there are six or more members in the band, and you don't play ska. You know, you probably don't need a second tambourine player, but fuck it, who cares! The whole point is to have fun with your friends. That's MARK SPARKLES. The music ends up being all over the place. It's a weird smattering of musical styles. It feels like a comp more than a four-song EP. Sometimes it's totally rocking, sometimes it's kind of amateurish. But it always has that undercurrent of fun and enthusiasm that unites all the tunes. This is a fun pop punk record, and probably best enjoyed live while wasted in a basement. The artwork on sleeve is really cool and deserves a mention. The world is fucking burning down! (FS)
(Abandon Hope)

MARCHING ORDERS – "Nation of Ghosts" EP

This is totally the stuff that Bruce Roehrs (R.I.P.) and I used to bond over. I couldn't give two fucks about most "skin" music because it's always slow and boring. I dig bands that pick up the pace a bit and have *hooooks*. These Aussies are all about the sing-along and I can respect that—I like a band that has more COCK SPARRER than the 4-SKINS. If current Oi floats your boat, then this is well worth the price of admission. (TB)
(Longshot)

MAYBE BABY – "All I've Got to Lose" EP

Four tracks of minimal, sneering punk rock. Straight to the point and carried with enough energy and pace that the three chords employed don't drag. Almost coming off as a mix of early QUEERS meets HUNX AND HIS PUNX. Nice. (SD)
(Windian)

MONUMENT – "Teeth & Tails" EP

Here we have some pretty predictable dark wave. Basically, imagine BERLIN playing BAUHAUS. It's not really dramatic enough to keep my attention but it's not so horrible that I wanna claw my eyes out or anything. (MM)
(Peter Out)

M.O.T.O. – "Kissing All the Wrong Asses" EP

I remember plenty of folks getting into a stir about these dudes. I dig 'em good enough, but this EP smokes. This is a bit left field, but they sound like a fuller, faster and *wayyyyy* better SLOPPY SECONDS. Bangin'. Ugggh, that comparison sounds terrible, but this record is fantastic RAMONES-inspired punk with just enough snot. This kills, especially the flip... (TB)
(Windian)

MUSICBAND – CD

Punchy garage elements of the HIVES paired with a sound reminiscent of ONE MAN ARMY. A little dated sounding, though not entirely awful. (GG)
(self-released, no info)

MYSTIK MOTORCYCLES – "Dress to Impress/Rock & Roll Died in Paris" 2xCD

Seriously? Who the hell are these guys to think that releasing a double-CD is a good idea? Not until you have a good decade or more under your belt and at least a hundred songs to choose from should you be releasing 26 tracks and over two hours of material for *any* reason! Hell, I can barely find any info on MYSTIK MOTORCYCLES online other than their sparse MySpace page, and from that all I gather is that they are French and that they released this themselves. So a credit to them for having a DIY ethic, but let's deflate the ego a bit guys and start with an EP of your four best songs maybe? Overall, there are some catchy, glammy rock'n'roll songs on here that can be compared to JAY REATARD or the CUTE LEPERS, but you would have to be an über-fan to actually wanna listen to this whole thing like I had to... (ML)
(self-released)

NARCOSIS – "Primera Dosis" LP

This is a legendary Peruvian punk band from the early to mid '80s. When I say legendary, I don't mean they played a bunch of shows with the right bands or had their t-shirts sold and worn by mall punks all over the globe. I mean legendary in a "I was given a tenth-generation copy of their tape that smuggled its way up from Peru to Colombia, dubbed a bunch of times, then sent over to some punks in Mexico and they dubbed and passed it on to me, when I got away from my folks while vacationing in Mexico and got my ass to the Chopo." This is the legendary I speak of. I have heard several Latin American punks say things like "This tape, along with a few others, saved my life." This is some crude-sounding, raw and nasty punk—the kind that was made from witnessing some serious eye-opening shit that got up a couple of kids asses and the result was that they felt the need to produce this wonderful mess. What we have here is an LP that was pulled from this original recording from 1985 and slapped onto vinyl. There are always going to be certain bands that come to Western minds when you say Latin American punk—OLHO SECO, LOS VIOLADORES, CÓLERA, MASSACRE 68, LEUZEMIA, and RATOS DE PORÃO are the most common—but when one digs deeper, one finds some truly mind-blowing, gritty punk gems, and this old recording by NARCOSIS is just that. (MS)
(Odio los Discos)

NASA SPACE UNIVERSE – "Brainrailers" EP

Cosmically solder the first DIE KREUZEN LP, BORN AGAINST's *Nine Patriotic Hymns for Children* LP, and, oh, I don't know, a hypothetical slightly hard rock-influenced Guy Picciotto band, and you'd get something resembling this 7". This is a dynamic record with somewhat of a unique sound that's emotional, abrasive, and bizarre all at the same time. There's also a lot of great guitar work that runs the gamut from off-kilter hardcore riffing to dissonant melodies to leads that actually go somewhere, and between this, the rabid vocals, and the tight, boomy drums that lends itself well to these songs. This record is well worth your time. (DG)
(Shogun)

NEEDLES//PINS – "Drop It/Kalifornia Korner"

Lo-fi power pop with chiming melodies buried under bedroom four-track fuzz, just the way I like 'em (although the sleeve indicates it was a studio production). The first side has the sugary catchiness of the UNDERTONES or RUDI, while the flip somehow combines the WHO and the VOIDOIDS. Great first release; I wonder if more polished production would dilute the charm? (AM)
(Scum Buzz)

NEVER BUILT RUINS – LP

I can still remember the first time I saw TRAGEDY. It was at ABC No Rio, just after the first LP was released, and I went because they were billed as ex-HIS HERO IS GONE. It was a phenomenal performance, and I had many great times seeing them since. But in the wake of the epi-crust wave they inspired, I'm beginning to reevaluate their legacy. I don't mean to single out NEVER BUILT RUINS as a TRAGEDY clone per-se, but there is a *heavy* influence at work here. These longer songs just seem to meander, and all these melodic leads and gang vocals on the choruses just make me want to listen to TRAGEDY and/or the Japanese and Scandinavian bands that influenced them. Look, this is very good, very competent hardcore punk with some melodic moments that recall NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, and I don't dislike it at all, it just lacks an element that would make them stand out from a lot of other bands treading the same path. Plus it came with a one-sheet, which always kind of weirds me out. (AU)
(Twisted Chords)

NEVER SAY NEVER – "Hymns of Hate" CD

First off, the cover of this CD features a totally stupid and awesome illustration of skeleton punx (with bonehawks) getting medieval on some poor humans and/or each other. The music within is raging, driving punk rock augmented by some heavy metal guitar work. While I'm not of the mind that metallic influences are always a bad thing, here the excessive and virtuosic shredding detracts from the otherwise powerful impact. Two of the dudes—Ballzinator and D-Dog—share vocal duties, and the mix of gruff and more abrasive screaming goes a long way. The picture on the back of one band member in a cowboy hat posing in front of a Revolutionary War-era American flag with a shotgun and jug of booze had me wondering if I was in for some Confederacy of Scum antics, but no—lyrically NEVER SAY NEVER is all about the personal struggles of punx in society. They cap off the ten original tunes with an unlisted bonus EXPLOITED cover. (CS)
(Ballz Out)

NHL95 – "Living Let Down" EP

I'm wondering if the reason why I got this to review was because there is an "NHL" in the band name, possibly referring to hockey and I'm the token Canadian here, and admittedly into hockey… But of course that is just a stereotype—and another one is how a lot of European punk bands have a distinct sound that tries to emulate many classic '80s and '90s US punk bands, but don't quite nail it and thereby create their own unique sound. This band from Finland is one of those bands. The songs on this EP sound like an amalgamation of ALL, BIG DRILL CAR, GOVERNMENT ISSUE and more, which creates that unique "European punk" sound! (ML)
(Pop-Poo)

NO BALLS – "Less" LP

Can I make up a sub-genre? Is that cool? Proto-psych-post-punk. But also very heavy… "Heavy" doesn't start with a P so I thought it might fukk up the alliteration if I threw that in there. These are chaotic sounds from BRAINBOMBS and TOTALITÄR personnel in Sweden, and this record is a total mindfuck that lands much closer to the BRAINBOMBS camp (definitely falls in to the "if you like that then you'll love this" category). The guitars are positively assaulted on every track, and the result is a filthy, glorious fukkn mess that perhaps ventures into the forbidden zone known as "art," but doing so with such brazen disregard for the potential musical fallout that I can't help but love them for it. Deliberate, dirty and downright delicious. (WN)
(Streaks)

NOISE-A-GO-GOS – "Rock'n'Noise Grind'n'Roll" LP

Ah ha ha ha! I'd missed out on this when it came out on CD, but it's basically the rock'n'roll side project of Japanese grind legends GORE BEYOND NECROPSY, though the grind and noise are still very much evident. Imagine if ENTOMBED's *Wolverine Blues* wasn't shitty, then turn up the blasts and weirdness by a factor of ten and you've got an idea of how awesome this record is. Wah-wah solos wail over blast-beats, vocals sing and puke and grunt while the band goes from rockabilly to grind to DEAD KENNEDYS-style punk and back in the span of 60 seconds. There are really no words to describe how fucking punk this record is. Just a bunch of friends writing songs that only make sense to them, and the rest of us can like it or go ahead and fuck off, and goddamn this shit is catchy. I'm not so much into the grind these days, but this scratches an itch I didn't even know I had. Fucking brilliant. Our copy came with the wrong inner sleeve, so I have no idea what kind of insanity is there, but I bet it's more than a little entertaining. (AU)
(Tardis)

OBN III'S – "No Way to Rock'n'Roll/Got More Love"

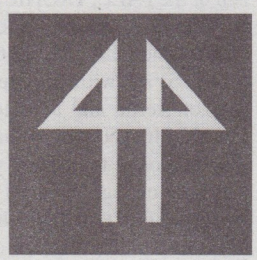
Wait a minute! Shouldn't Gemma be reviewing this? Whatever. OBN III'S are a Texas band featuring a certain BAD SPORTS guy. This is far less buzz-poppy than I expected, which scores one notch in the win column immediately. The A-side sounds like a teen SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS cover band that has yet to fully embrace full-steam debauchery, but is on the very cusp of something otherworldly. They stretch the groove out here, smothering it in guitar. Daddy like! The flip is more Detroit, though it moves from sludge to pummel in a way only obsessive STOOGES hounds can create. Daddy like again! Now I gotta buy the fucking thing. Goddamnit… been tryin' to cut down. (MC)
(Super Secret)

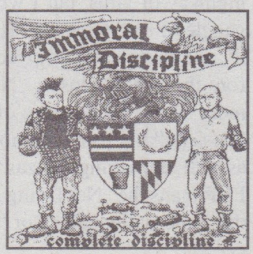
OLDE GHOST – "Use Yer Illusion 3'n'4" LP

Here's a hardcore band that gets the honor of not being easily categorized into a particular genre, and therefore being a bit distinctive and welcome to cynical ears. OLDE GHOST has an approach reminiscent of the glorious screamo era without being quite as spastic as some of the (godlike) Gravity bands. Instead, the songs carry a passionate mid-tempo hardcore sound that comes off as a DC post-hardcore vibe mixed with early-'90s hardcore. There are lots of change-ups and intricate guitar work that become more apparent with each spin, and the singer pulls off constant screaming that somehow is both incensed and soothing at the same time. A lyric sheet would have been nice, but otherwise I have to say that this album merits a good listen (or two or five). (BG)
(Handstand)

OSS – "Gated Ghost Town" EP

Apparently OSS were a short-lived band that only played a few shows and recorded a demo in 2009. This three-song 7"





is a vinyl version of the demo. OSS features the singer of MK-ULTRA the hardcore band (not MK-ULTRA the alternative band). Though I don't think MK-ULTRA, either version, is a good reference point. This is more straightforward, mid-paced, screamo-style hardcore. The first track is the real winner with some nice dynamic changes and a chorus made to be sung along to. The second keeps things interesting with some cool atmospheric guitar overdubs. Song number three is the fastest and builds to a nice crescendo, though it is the least interesting tune on the record. A+ die-cut sleeve. Worth checking out. (MD)
(King of Monsters)

OVERNIGHT LOWS – "Slit Wrist Rock'n'Roll /I'll Be Everything"

This is a pretty good single. One original poppy song and an ED NASTY & THE DOPEDS cover. These guys play a twangy, garage-influenced brand of rock'n'roll that could be compared to EXPLODING HEARTS. At least that's the feel of their original; the cover is more filthy sounding KBD-style punk. But, as the saying goes, you can't judge a band by their KBD cover song. But yeah, good stuff, if you dig the records Goner puts out, you'll like this too. (FS)
(Goner)

PER PURPOSE – "Heil Progress" EP

I think I want to move to Australia. Once again, the best thing I've heard in a while reveals itself to be a product of that prison colony. Deportation was a blessing. PER PURPOSE channels the shambolic Northern post-punk ramblings of BIG FLAME, the NIGHTINGALES, DANDELION ADVENTURE, etc. and deliver it with the MINUTEMEN's urgent eye on the stopwatch: none of the six songs on this 7" outstay their welcome! Energy and experimentation with one foot firmly in the pop camp. Love it. New fave band. (AM)
(Bedroom Suck)

PHEROMOANS – "It Still Rankles" LP

Anyone with half a curiosity or propensity for digging the early-man stomp and lyrically ripe cultism of the FALL, TRONICS or the SWELL MAPS will continue to dig further into bedroom bliss with this new LP by Brighton, England's PHEROMOANS. As with the previously mentioned heroes of sterile and accented gritted grooves, the PHEROMOANS know just enough about what they're doing to master your expectations, and just little enough to inject a fresh design into the wheel again. "Bad Dandelion" flings itself finally into the building urge to dance, after the quizzically appealing shamble-hooks of "The Greasy Years." "Pack of Rats" is a bit of a clunker on the highway of jams, but I wouldn't be surprised if a gaggle of true-believer PHEROMOANS fans "got it" and thoroughly enjoyed it in defiance. Just before the A-side closes, "Neurotic Sunbeams" rips more seams in the story of UK punk, creepy bass lines skulking past with nods. Side B holds up just as well, delivering stanzas not unlike the YUMMY FUR (sans the "Not Doing Nothing" which follows the same philosophies of "Pack of Rats"—plop it right down the middle of the record, dude, it's funnier that way). You finally hit "Soft Targets," unassumingly hanging out two-thirds down the B-side if you care to listen—it's rewardingly violent and fun and I only wish I had a 45 of it to spin on repeat. Dan Treacy moonlights from Syd Barrett's house on "I'll Laugh at Anything," and it keeps up the fun through the home stretch. There is a special list of bands out there that have put you in the mood for reading a book, jumping on your bed, and throwing your neck out at a show; put PHEROMOANS right in with the best. (JS)
(Convulsive)

THE PHRASEMONGERS – "Songs of Fight and Failure" CD

Six tracks of Germanic (well, they are German!) SCREECHING WEASEL-esque snot and angst. This ain't *Anthem for a New Tomorrow*, but then again, what is? It's a decent blast of melodic rock'n'roll with pop overtones. Released on their own label, and worth checking out, even if they don't like DIE TOTEN HOSEN for some inexplicable reason. (RK)
(Evil Bird)

PORCELAIN BOYS – "Away Awhile" CD

This is a Japanese re-release of the Pop Kid Records collection. It does have a couple additional PORCELAIN BOYS tracks tacked on from a split with MARBLE, which is included in its entirety. This also has better graphics than the original release with nice photos of the original EPs. This band from the '90s was part of the DESCENDENTS worship scene along with G WHIZ and the ATARIS. I was big on them back then, so this is a welcome release. Good tuneful pop punk. (RL)
(SP)

POST FATA RESURGO – "Il Futuro É Giá Passato" LP

Agipunk seems to be the primary flag bearers for the Euro-crust army lately, and this Italian band will help them in their valiant metallic effort to spread the message of gruff vocals, melodic guitar leads and rampaging battle crust. The melodic elements here owe more to power metal than your average crust warrior—the guitar leads and discordant riffing remind me specifically of LUDICRA/HAMMERS OF MISFORTUNE axeman John Cobbett. The record didn't grab me initially, but by the end of "Voldano Voy" on the first side, I was hooked. This is definitely Euro-crust for adults (or perhaps for nerds), with engaging and difficult song construction that takes the metal comparisons even further and a drummer that might have taken one too many lessons, but everything comes together and works fabulously. Killer record. (WN)
(Agipunk)

PRETTY BOY THORSON & THE FALLING ANGELS / WORTHWHILE WAY – split EP

Two country punk bands—one from Japan and one from the good ole' US of A—share duty on this record. PRETTY BOY THORSON sounds like a watered down version of SLOBBERBONE, a band that probably would never have been reviewed in this magazine because they liked mandolins and shit. But, nonetheless, SLOBBERBONE rules, so that's not at all an insult. I am, however, a wee bit tired of country punk songs about drinking whiskey and saying fuck you to everybody as you walk home, alone and piss drunk. This could be really good, but this band just needs to take one more step, either in the loud, fast punk direction, or in the ass-wasted sad country direction. WORTHWHILE WAY is the Japanese band, and the more country of the two. They sing in English, which at first I was disappointed by because the lyrics are also written in Japanese (and I wanted to hear me some Japanese country, damnit!). The lyrics are actually pretty cool though. The singer, Mayu, really tries to get to the heart and soul of country music, while conjuring images that seem distinctly Japanese to my white-boy ears. They have a faster song with bouncier, punk beat, and a slower "punx playing heartfelt country acoustic song" uh, song. This whole record reminds me of stuff Bloodshot Records used to put out. If that means anything to you, pick this up. (LP)
(Eager Beaver)

PROTO IDIOT – "Still Stupid" LP

Still Stupid is a collection of homespun solo punk courtesy of a young UK punker from the HIPSHAKES. I believe that this is his second solo LP as PROTO IDIOT, but it's the first I've heard. The platform here is poppy punk rock with heavy emphasis on jangle. It's a neat sound, but not varied enough to hold attention. It's also more than a tad on the wacky side, which is fine in small doses, but grates over the course of an LP. There's not a sour note struck here, but there's really not a whole lot to cling to either. There's a better-than-average 7" EP here, but interest wanes on the big boy format. (MC)
(Red Lounge)

PSYCLONES – "Different Thinking People" LP

Geez. *Different Thinking People* is a busy record. I feel overwhelmed. I think I'll make a list of what it sounds like. Let's see… CULTURCIDE, OMD, DEVO and some kind of proto-circus-yuppie-thing. Wait! I think I mean FRANK ZAPPA. It's super weird in that corny, self-conscious, annoying way. If your dad or uncle or something is into smoking weed (or skinning ketamine) and embarrassing you in front of your date, then you might want to give this record to him because he will totally fucking love it. (HD)
(Permanent / Ladd Frith)

PUBERTY – "Invitations/Parties"

This side project of the INTELLIGENCE delivers "Invitations," complete with a nice spooky groove of bottom-heavy guitars and shared male/female vocals. Unfortunately it's so repetitive and bland overall, I half expected there to be some gag at the end just to make sure you critics suffered the whole track. Oh, that came on side B, which shuffles aimlessly along with "Parties"—nothing offensively bad, just not a shred growl or guts (even for shameless pop) for something with such cutesy, literal, funny (ha ha) lyricism. It seems like they are having fun with this but I'm not sure anyone would ever dance to it, DJ to it or buy it for a friend in need.

Get stoned to it? That might be good enough for some folks, but a dime bag says you forget to even turn the plate over. Extra points deducted for the found-on-my-desktop cover art. (JS)
(Telephone Explosion)

QUINTRON – "Sucre Du Sauvage" 2 x LP

Are you ready for a double LP of QUINTRON and MISS PUSSYCAT live at the New Orleans Museum of Art?! Apparently QUINTRON set up his home studio in the museum surrounded by self-selected portraits of various ladies from the museum's collection, and also camped out in the grounds to make field recordings in nature. The sounds that resulted from this artist's retreat err on the basement/garage dance party side of QUINTRON's oeuvre. Lots of keyboards, synths and drum buddy atmospherics turn this double disc into an epic '60s road movie drug disaster 'sploitation soundtrack. The song "Kicked Outta Zolar X" is particularly poignant; you can feel the pathos. You may ask yourself if you actually need a double LP of QUINTRON jamming the fuck out at a museum; it's gotta be stiff right? Museums are too full of stuff made by dead people!? Well, so is rock'n'roll and you eat it up, so grab a plate and shut your mouth kid. (LG)
(Goner)

RADIO EXILES – "Diminished Return" EP

This is sort of tough to pin down. A few of the songs here come across as indie or college rock, but then there is one that has a fairly distinct NERVES vibe going on. Specifically, the vocals sound pretty similar to Jack Lee. I don't think I would really call this power pop, though. It's lacking that extra oomph that would round out the power pop feel that it seems like they are going for. (BD)
(Dude Dudes)

RAS – "Vill Ha Mer/Ett Folk, Ett Ras"

Poppy garage punk that's fun and tough in a teenager-sneaking-into-a-bar sort of way, with a touch of snot for good measure. "Vill Ha Mer" is the more happy-go-lucky-sounding of the two, and gets carried by the momentum of the first riff, whereas the following two riffs fall flat, but the structure of this song has the same thing repeating for the second half of the song, so you get the good stuff again. "Ett Folk, Ett Ras" has a louder low end for some reason and is more bleak but also somehow insanely catchy, and sort of listens like a Scandi-CARBONAS getting into it with an Adolescent Posh Boy or something. These are the kinds of songs I wish KNUGEN FALLER had written. (DG)
(Push My Buttons)

THE REBEL SPELL – "It's A Beautiful Future" CD

Good old-fashioned, infectiously enthusiastic, politically charged melodic punk. No surprise that these chaps are Canadian. More early FACE TO FACE than PROPAGANDHI, but the catchy tunes and dead-on political sentiments are all there. And they do justice to the classic LEON ROSSELSON "Diggers Song," which is never a bad thing. (RK)
(Rebel Time)

REJECTED – "Beware Non-Believers" CD

Eric Drooker and Jake Bannon must've been commissioned to join forces for this CD's artwork, the name of which might've been inspired by all the pain and heartache at the hands of all those those evil, conniving harlots and drama queens that tortured the sensitive souls that comprise this band. The vocalist even got his "FTW" tattoo because of one of these monstrous women, as described in the song "Lovesicklove." But then he admits "Girl, I sure know how to play this game" in "1st Round Knock Out," so who knows. But if you decide to make catching SICK OF IT ALL playing with BOMBSHELL ROCKS part of your trip to Finland, maybe these guys will open. (DG)
(self-released)

REVERSE – "Chasing Ghosts" CD

Not long ago, I reviewed a retrospective CD of this band's early material. They formed in Stoke-on-Trent in the early '90s and broke up in 1997. Apparently, they are back, with a new bloke on drums. I can't imagine the masses were clamoring for them to reunite, so they must be doing it for the fun of it, and what better reason? British pop punk was the order of the day then, and it's the order of the day now: earnest, melodic mid-paced riffing with emotional vocals. To be honest, it's very much on the wimpy side. I would have lumped their old material in with the likes of SENSELESS THINGS, MEGA CITY FOUR or TRAVIS CUT, but this new stuff lacks any kind of edge to make it more punk than pop. I'm glad (for their sake) that they are back out there, but unfortunately I'd reach for the early discography CD again before I'd play this new material. By the way, there are seventeen songs here, so I'd guess they'd been saving them up. (AM)
(SP)

RICCOBELLIS – "Booze-up With Dee Dee Ramone" CD

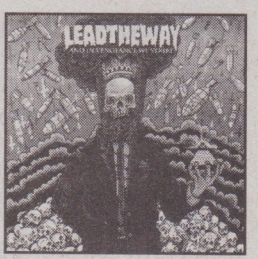
You've probably heard bands get referred to as "RAMONES-worship" before, but never...ever...has it been truer than with the RICCOBELLIS. This CD is one long love letter to the RAMONES. Complete with a band picture of them in leather jackets leaning against a brick wall. And yes one of them is wearing a RAMONES shirt. And every song is a rip-off of a pre-existing RAMONES song. Like the songs *Dreaming of R'N'R High School*, or *Julie Is A Punk Girl*. You're wasting your time worshiping idols. The RAMONES released like 28 LPs, the world does not need another one. (FS)
(SP)

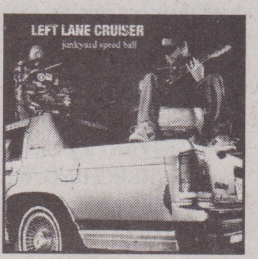
RIP IT UP – "Flatliners" EP

This entire record listens like one big collection of various gloomy riffs, some separated by brief sound collages, that are all over the place in terms of tempos and styles, but the two I hear a bit more of are thrashy hardcore and metallic noodling. The vocals are shouted and angsty like a clean-cut hardcore kid that recently got his heart broken, and the recording is clear without being polished, with the fuzzy guitar and powerful drums playing off of each other nicely. Even though I like this band's sound, in this case, I think this record would be more worthy of repeat listens if these songs were more structured. (DG)
(self-released)

ROYAL MONSTERS – "Blackwater" EP

The first thing that caught my eye was on the little King of the Monsters label ad thing that comes in the record, it states that ROYAL MONSTERS had a previous single on New Age Records. A quick tap-tap-tap into the ol' Google machine tells me that this is in fact the same New Age Records from the nine-zeros that released OUTSPOKEN, GRIP/DAYSPRING, AMENDMENT 18, etc. I had no idea that label was still around. Wild stuff. I know, I know, who cares? So, I'm not sure, but I think this is what amazing-core sounds like. Anthemic and scream-y songs sung (toward the sky), moments of melodious metallic octave acrobatics in le riffage, quiet moments before bursting out in tantrum. In the 1990s we would have called this emo-core, but now that has been co-opted by muggles and currently refers to kids with jet black hair and





Kate Goslin bangs playing mosh metal. I guess that means I kinda like it. (JU)
(King of the Monsters)

RUBBER CUSHIONS – "Crazy" EP

OBLIVIANS-style gutsy, soulful and manic rocking with enough sleaze and low-hanging big ones to keep me more than happy. These North Carolinians sound like the TURPENTINE BROTHERS getting ripped to the tits with the KNOCKOUT PILLS on a solid diet of bourbon and the beast with too backs. Fave of the month, hi-5. (GG)
(Girth)

THE RUCKERS – "Take It or Leave It" EP

My goodness, this is horrible. Absolute bottom-of-the-barrel German street punk/Oi that is every bit as tragic, hokey and predictable as the worst MTV pop punk boy band. The whoa-whoa sing-alongs and laughable English lyrics ("Remember those Berlin nights!") only add to the embarrassment. (JH)
(Contra / Longshot)

SAME OLD STORY – "A Great Disgrace" CD

We have eleven tracks of speedy, driving melodic hardcore from Sweden. The sound is more early RANDY than MILLENCOLIN, but you get the drift. The lyrics are political, as far as I can tell, but lean a little to the poetic side—meaning I'm not sure I get it all, which might just be because I don't really get it, or maybe it's because English isn't their first language? Fortunately, melodic hardcore is a pretty international sound at this point, so that much I get. And dig. (RK)
(Engineer)

SAVAGIST – "Fire From Friction/Descension of the Red Locusts"

Metal as fuck. Two stripped-down and slower crusty death metal tracks with aggro lyrics about the bleak relationship between humans and nature. The songs make me pissed. The cover with the wolf snarling makes me pissed. Earthquakes and tsunamis make me pissed. This band taps a primal chord and then pounds on it. (BL)
(Reactionary)

THE SCRAMS – "Zodak/Eat the Beat"

Dark, thudding garage with slight hints of that ever-lovable goth rock. A primitive groove hammered along by some nifty Hammond organ ivory tinkering. Almost sounds like that foppy mop-top CLINT BOOM sitting behind the keys. Eerie guitar overtones permeate the sound, giving it that haunted house vibe that all good garage bands should strive for. MURDER CITY DEVILS, beat round the head with a nice wallop of the GUN CLUB whilst early INSPIRAL CARPETS nicks both their car stereos. (SD)
(Dirtcult)

SCREECHING WEASEL – "First World Manifesto" LP

No, this isn't a joke. April Fools was last month's issue. SCREECHING WEASEL did in fact record a new full-length album. This would be their first new record in eleven years. During the '90s these guys created some of the best pop-punk albums in existence. Most people say *Wiggle* or *My Brain Hurts* are their best albums, but *Anthem For A New Tomorrow* is actually their best. But regardless of which one is the best, they wrote at least seven *good* albums (the other five are debatable). Seven! Rarely can a band write four good albums. Try to think of all the bands that wrote four *good* albums. Bet you can count them on one hand. And by now, I'd say the Weasel logo is the third most common band tattoo (right behind BLACK FLAG bars and MISFITS skull). Okay, cutting to the chase: is the reunion album any good? Well there are two answers. For those of you who are totally stoked to hear the new SCREECHING WEASEL album, you will love it. It sounds exactly how SCREECHING WEASEL has always sounded: fast poppy and bratty. Just like this could have been recorded in 2001. But for those of you slightly skeptical on the worth of this album, well, your reaction will be a bit more complex. At first you'll be surprised that the songs are actually okay. It's not a total turd of a record as you secretly suspected it might be. Maybe they sound a bit more like NOFX than they used to, but they're not bad. There's not a single song on the whole album that *rules* but there's some good stuff in there. Okay so maybe this analogy best describes the feeling: so you're at a restaurant and you order a grilled cheese sandwich with tomato slices inside. And when it gets served to you, you take one bite and realize they didn't put the tomato in. You're kind of bummed cause it's not what you wanted, but it's still a grilled cheese sandwich. And grilled cheese sandwiches are delicious. Sure you'll complain about it to the friend your eating with, but you eat the whole damn thing and enjoy it for what it is. (FS)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

SCREAMING SMOLDERING BUTT BITCHES – "Ménage à Twat" CD

OK, I'll admit when I saw I had been assigned to review a CD by a band called SCREAMING SMOLDERING BUTT BITCHES, I was bummed (pun intended), but it turns out this album is actually pretty great. 31 tracks of simple, too-the-point, loose (but not sloppy) punk rock with awesome trashy guitar. I could definitely throw on the riot grrl tag here, but this is really just part of a longer tradition exemplified (musically and in spirit) by the WRECKS' "Punk is an Attitude." The songs range from 16 seconds to the epic 1-minute, 57-second "Party Down," with just over half clocking in under a minute long. *Ménage à Twat* gives it to you straight on tracks like "Hetrosexuals" ("Hetrosexuals are uptight"), "Souvenir" ("That fuck was so great, I want a souvenir / Can I get a t-shirt or koozie to hold my beer?"), "That Bitch Stole Barney" (self-explanatory) and "MySpace in MyFuckFace" (also self-explanatory… I think?), and even includes two DESCENDENTS covers and a tribute of sorts to fellow Akron punkers ZERO DEFEX called "Eat My Ass." Oh yeah, and the CD even has two movie files, but I was listening to it on my computer at work and didn't want my boss catching me watching SCREAMING SMOLDERING BUTT BITCHES vids on the clock… (CS)
(Butt Bitch)

TY SEGALL BAND – "Live in Aisle 5" LP

I have been waiting for this record for a long time. That might be surprising for some people to hear, but it's true. The LP was recorded in 2010 with TY's live band who pretty much kick ass. His studio records are done mostly by himself. The live lineup has changed since this was recorded, but this one was pretty great: Tim Hellman on bass and Emily Rose on drums. There are a few of shouts of "Fuck you, Tim" between songs so maybe everyone doesn't agree. (I kid.) Included are tracks from all three albums plus covers of GG ALLIN's "Don't Talk to Me" and the VIBRATORS' "Baby, Baby." Aside from some goofy speed changes on some of the between-song banter, this is a great live record. It is recorded really well and the band energy is very high. It is a relief and a disappointment that the LED ZEP cover at the end of side two gets cut off. The record comes bootleg style with blank white labels. (CK)
(Southpaw)

SETIEMBREONCE – "No Estamos a Slavo" 10"

Here are five dudes from Uruguay playing fast as hell political thrash. These songs reside somewhere between DRI *Crossover* era and TEAR IT UP, but it's maintains the speed of good thrash through out. This is more like L'AMICO DI MARTUCCI. They cover "Basta ya de Lamentarse" by LOS INVASORES from Uruguay, "Rebelde" by los BEATNIKS from Argentina and "Siente el Cambio" by G3 from Peru. The production is a little distracting here, it's really slick and those awesome gravelly tuff vocals need to be turned the fuck up. It's not necessarily unique, but the songs are good, varied enough to give a listen to and the musicianship is good. If anything, they definitely have some right on politics and for me it makes a difference. I am interested to see what happens with this band. (MB)
(Spastic Fantastic / Kawaii / Les Nains Aussi / Ethnospine Noise / Crapoulet / Don't Trust You)

SEVEN SISTERS OF SLEEP – LP

Churning stoner crust from Southern California, SEVEN SISTERS OF SLEEP lurch like a steamroller trying to shift gears. None of the songs really resonate with me, but the goal here seems to be the creation of a vibe, and they have certainly succeeded in that department. Low-end rumble and down-tuned guitars share sound waves with thunderous drums, only approaching a steady mid-tempo stomp when they need to make a point….but it's a point that is sometimes lost in the murky abyss of repetitive riffs that don't go anywhere. Perhaps this is the flawless presentation of slightly flawed music? (WN)
(A389)

SEXPISTOLSTANTEN OCH MOCKFJÄRDSVAPNET – "Det Arliga CV:t" LP

One of the workers bees at the compound has been blindsiding me recently with these super obscuro Scandinavian punk records that often times actually comes from Texas (SECRET PROSTITUTES?). This shit is from Sweden as far as I can

tell and sounds like it was recorded in 1979, aping the sounds of classic late-'70s Swede punk like the RUDE KIDS or EBBA GRÖN but with super bratty female vocals. I'm gonna throw out the obscure LIVIN' SACRIFICE as a comparison because they had the same bratty vibe… This is *amazing!* Raw as fuck. Punk as fuck. (TB)
(Skrammel)

SHEGLANK'D SHOULDERS – "Skate Assassin" flexi

A fucking flexi with a cover of a panther skating over a crowd of punks and skins—that would look great on the side of a van. Fast skate rock hardcore that's good. Songs about denim-vested hoards drinking, slamming and, of course, skating. Vocals that remind me of the F.U.'S or the FREEZE, who I love. I am melding with the cover as I listen and am becoming a giant blue skating panther catching air off a punk's head. I think you should buy this. (RO)
(Handsome Dan)

SHOW TRUMENA – "Stand Up and Fight" CD

This is weird. All the riffs in these songs are familiar, such as "Smoke on the Water," that really annoying "woo-hoo" BLUR song, and a few others that I can't quite pick out. The words are all written in Ukrainian, and then translated to English. They include a short history of the band in the back of the booklet, which happens to be in fairly broken English. Seems like they were pretty popular in the early '00s, then broke up for a bit and reformed around 2006. I'm not sure if they are still around, as this was apparently released in 2007. (BD)
(Miravoice)

SLUTS – "What Made You This Way?" EP

This is the third band with the name SLUTS that I know of. This is not the German band, nor is this the old Southern US band, but these SLUTS are from Osaka, Japan, and have an American singer. This four-track EP is hardcore in a Mystic Records meets 7"-era GORILLA BISCUITS way. It has a bit of a musical playfulness to it, but not so much that it becomes too goofy. If this sounds like your cup o' tea, then snag this one up. (MS)
(Love Over Voltage)

SNAKEFLOWER 2 – "Memory Castle" EP

Slumped into a highly flammable, giant beanbag (don't drop that blunt, man) of '70s be-permed and thick mustached classic rock. My dad could've very easily rocked out to these when half of me was just a mere sperm in his nutsack. Nothing new or fresh about this sound, but all the same I like it and they do this well. Though maybe I'm just nostalgic for my days as a sperm… (GG)
(Southpaw)

SOLID ATTITUDE – "Prison Water" EP

It's blown out, equally influenced by glam rock and hardcore. Trying to sound like sleaze trash possibly covered in glitter, like junkies at Hollywood and Vine. It's got some dude fucking whining/shouting at me, possibly slightly jangley. Taking a note from shitgaze but sounding weirdly like BRIDEZ who really just want to be ROYAL TRUX. But really, I mean really, I could just listen to REDD KROSS. (MM)
(Rotted Tooth)

SO PASTEL – "Tremulous Quavers" LP

This is a tough one to peg down, which can be a good thing, but sometimes not. So let's break it down, shall we? The pace is mostly slow and plodding, with a few upbeat parts thrown in. The vocals are the spoken/sung style, are muffled/distorted throughout, but generally monotone. The bass sounds great and at times made me think of BIG BLACK. I'm not much of drum guy, but there are drums and they do the job, not too busy, while adding enough to all the musical shifts. The guitar adds a lot of character from nice little leads to a big, muddy blast. What does it all add up to? Hell if I know. All I do know is that it didn't excite me. Maybe it was the vocals. Maybe it was how the songs seem to cram in way too many ideas for my taste. There are definitely some cool sounds emanating from this record, but it was a difficult listen. (MD)
(self-released)

SORRY EXCUSE – "Normalcy" EP

Kansas City's answer to the crop of raw straight edge hardcore bands that have been kicking around Chicago (POISON PLANET, DURESS, NOOSE, BOILING OVER, etc.) over the last couple of years, and it's no surprise that they already had a 7" on Third Party. This is a little less influenced by powerviolence and fast hardcore than some of their contemporaries, and heavier on the moshy breakdowns, drawn-out buildups and abrupt song endings, but it's just as good as any of the other recent Third Party bands. They steer clear of any of the formulaic potholes that plague the vast majority of records that take their cues from youth crew, and the instrument tones and recording are both perfectly raw and burly. If stuff like this really is the new face of straight edge hardcore, then count...me...IN! (DG)
(Lifeline)

SPIDER FEVER – "Whatcha Gonna Do/Party Girl"

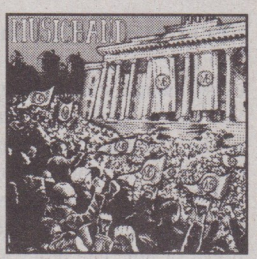
This is another killer record cover. It's been good this month. Looks like some 'tard on drugs got in the finger paint and smeared spiders, skulls, syringes and booze all over this shit—straight up junkie punk rock'n'roll. "Whatcha Gonna Do" is a better song, but you gotta love a song called "Party Girl." Play it as you fall down the stairs. (RO)
(HoZac)

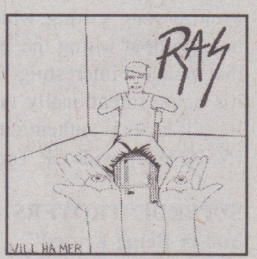
THE SPINES – "Autoharp Punk" CD

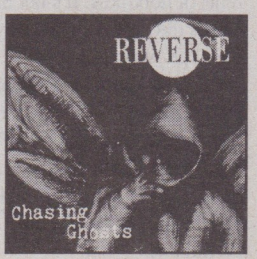
Well, there is an autoharp here...and electric bass…and drums. So basically, the autoharp just acts as a jangly/undistorted guitar. I guess anything played by folks wearing DEAD KENNEDYS t-shirts is punk? And certainly, I guess in that old broad church concept back in the late '70s, anything a bit different was punk. The SPINES are a clean, jangly SWELL MAPS, or perhaps AU PAIRS. This is definitely not folk, nor punk really, in the traditional use of the terms. But there you go. (RK)
(self-released)

STATE POISON – LP

French noise-core assault STATE POISON is back with this brutal full length! This shit is fast! The drums sound like they are destroying a church by booming through its empty halls—the sound is deep and bored-out, but not lost in echo. The drummer switches from driving consistent beats that propel the speed of the music to quick tight fills that beat the toms to ruin. The bass is deep and distorted, but not muddy, with that fuzzy tone lurking just under the surface that hits you in the brain. It's simple and driving for the most part but definitely has some killer neck climbing to accent the simple moments of the other instruments. Did I mention that this shit is fast? The guitar is clean enough to hear, yet distorted enough to make a sonic mess. There are screeches and feedback when needed, and the solos are chaotic, but not over done. The vocals are interesting because I really think that having this style of punk sung in French (not their exclusive language on this record)







adds another dimension to the music. The vocals seem more muddled in their shouts with a drawl underneath the reverb and delay, while still maintaining that throaty yet yelled anger. It's a different kind of urgency than I am used to, but definitely just as fucked up...and that is a good thing. All the songs here have a good balance of structure and total ruin. The recording quality is fucking tops. I know this band belongs to the CONFUSE/SWANKYS hardcore family, but their sound definitely hits home in the GAUZE realm. The lyrics come in French, English and Japanese, and cover war, human suffering, and general themes of why the world is a fucked up place. The cover art is a drawn grayscale, surreal war in an urban space scene, without the dead kids (thanks for that). "You've Come to Die" is a fucking jam and if you think you hear whistling on one of these tracks, that's exactly what that shit is... Awesome! Get it! (MB)
(Kick Rock / Flower of Carnage)

THE STEINWAYS – "Promise It'll Never Happen Again" LP

Saccharine, bubble-gummy pop punk. This LP is the band's singles-and-comp-tracks collection, released two or three years after they broke up, but I've never heard of 'em before. Far from mandatory, as they just mine the generic pop punk playbook. Oh, no wait, they go farther than that: there's a QUEERS cover on here, and a song with music written by Mike Erg. Boring songs with boring lyrics undercut by un-cutely self-deprecating liner notes. Pass. (LP)
(Don Giovanni / It's Alive)

STEPDADS – "Child Support" EP

I like stripped down, dirty, rockin', garage-y experimental stuff, which is where this is pointing, but this isn't great. The guitars are fuzzed out to shit, the drumming is muffled and basic yet erratic in its accuracy and the vocals are screechy. All the elements are cohesive and I like that the recording quality is all fucked up, whether intentional or not. The lyrics are super fucking dumb, but again they fit the music. This is almost good, but there is something missing... maybe it's more exciting song writing, which I think could be done here without losing the ignorance or lo-fi aspect that makes it interesting. Overall, this sounds like it's being intentionally under done... so I guess what it lacks is authenticity. (MB)
(NMG Worldwide / P. Trash)

SUPERDESTROYERS – "Slave to the Urge/ You're Being Erased"

SUPERDESTROYERS are a KBD-style punk band from New Orleans with super strong undercurrents of dorkiness. It's not intentional dorkiness, but it shines through. This rules by the way! Well, "Slave to the Urge" is nothing special. It's simple, raw and gritty with a good hook. But this record is all about "You're Being Erased." It's got the fuzz and crunchiness of classic KBD but with a WIPERS-style guitar riff. And the singer sounds like and has the singing cadence of WEIRD AL. Which, put all together, totally rules. I love this band already. (FS)
(Windian)

TELEFON – "Smysl Malych Cinu" LP

I had heard good things about this band from none other than The Wizard himself, Robert Collins. That's a recommendation I don't take lightly, and nor should you. When bands profess to play "stripped down, no-bullshit punk rock" I tend to find that there is, in fact, an abundance of bullshit. TELEFON make no such pronouncements, but if that phrase hadn't become such a tired cliché, it would be an apt description of their sound. Simple, sparse, minimal punk rock played with energy and intensity and with no obvious attempt to sound like anything else. It's almost a combination of older Dutch punk like early EX or RONDOS, mixed with newer influences like EDDIE CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING. More straightforward than those references might suggest though: no art school pretension to be found. Once again, any attempt to stump The Wizard proves fruitless: the man is always right, and I'm off now to dig into the *MRR* collection to track down TELEFON's earlier releases. (AM)
(Vrah)

THREE TOED SLOTH – "...Against the Odds" 2x7"

This is really fucking cool... An Australian band from 1993 that no one gave a shit about until a box of LPs were found and promptly seized up by taste makers like Byron Coley and Tom Lax of Siltbreeze. It's got thick guitars and an undercurrent of unease, reminding me of the first VENOM P STINGER 7" and also weirdly enough, UNWOUND. Apparently they shared members with FEEDTIME but it's not really "rock" like that. The song "The Odds" is so good, so darkly claustrophobic and atmospheric and doomed. Seriously, the whole 2x7" is *essential*... Makes me think of someone trying to play VENOM P STINGER songs after the pubs close, after a shitty night or a shitty job, sort of raging and slurring... Fuck yeah. Gotta find a copy of the LP now!! Apparently they are playing again... There are only around 200 of these so act fast. (LG)
(Unwucht)

TRASH KIT / WOOLF – split EP

London's TRASH KIT follows up a well-received LP on Upset the Rhythm with "Paper" and "Skin," still sporting their trademark busy drums and equally skittish note-picking guitar work. The vocals sound a bit more full and heavy than the LP, and it seems like a good move. "Paper" stands out as it holds its cards and tells a story; "Skin" feels more frantically tough but I think fans of TRASH KIT will turn both tracks up well past ten and know the choruses by the end despite not being "pop" music. WOOLF, also out of London, share the split and squeeze on four tracks to this 45. They have a cool thing going on, a great pop-hooked punk groove on "December" and some girl-punk howls on "Sanilands" feel immediate. "Fishing with Lolita" begins interestingly in its twinning of whispering guitars and vocals, but still feel a bit half-baked by the end. I can't say I'm crazy about the vocals... kinda like an old lady screaming at her corgis. I need some serious anger when someone is going off that loudly. All in all, this is probably a rewarding and unique slice of current girls in London punk, and being a small pressing I suspect, would be worth a pick up sooner than later. (JS)
(Milk)

THE TROWELS – "Drop In Drop Out" EP

These guys put their mailing address as the FDR skatepark in Philly so you can safely infer that they like to ride around on planks with wheels, but these dudes take skater punk hardcore to the next level with songs about pouring concrete and kicking out weak thrashers. The guitars are fast and the vocals are both snotty and growling. Kind of a drunk-punk throwback to the heyday of skate punk. (BL)
(self-released)

UNCURBED – "Turmoil" LP

After 20 years in existence, Sweden's UNCURBED began to slough off original and core members over their last few releases since 2005, until the original rhythm section was left with a NAPALM DEATH-type situation of mostly new members drifting further from their boisterous, party punx, UK dual-vocalled mayhem, and picking up a largely unimaginative WOLFBRIGADE-ish death metal-tinged hardcore sound. Less muddled and grimy low-end hardcore than the previous *Back From the Ditch* that pointed in this direction and with way more metallic in guitar tone and structure. This is delivered with precision and power. The new singer is suitably severe, but on the whole, what appears to be the band's final record is largely unmemorable middle/low-end hardcore... Especially when it's tied to the memory of UNCURBED's history of classic records—a problem when you retain a band name but drastically change the lineup and sound. Even the gatefold artwork is a predictable bland generic crust emblem of arrows, a gasmask and bombs, from a band who's strength was their unpredictability of what they'd present themselves as next—naked hippies? Protest punks on a truck? A police lineup? Everything about this is somewhat predictable—lyrics, music—and for some people that would be its strength and power and this would be a killer record to crank up at high volume, as what it promises it fully delivers. (KS)
(Agipunk)

UNHOLY GRAVE – "Grind Killers" LP

Raw rehearsal studio recording from 2008... you get used to the sound quality after a few songs (though most UNHOLY GRAVE fans are used to this by now) and settle in for some ballistic Japanese grind/crust. *Grind Killers* ironically features less grind than most UNHOLY GRAVE releases, but their ballistic approach is by no means tempered and Takaho's vocals are weirder than ever. 22 songs and a killer poster. (WN)
(Agipunk)

THE UNRELEASABLES – "Six Songs for Sick Minds" EP

There are so many reasons to not like this record: stupid band name, cartoon cover, dumb lyrics, one side plays at 45, the other at 33, etc.

The song "Pop Punk" is simply a list of pop punk bands. I mean, really?!? Yet, the sound this band makes is pretty great. Fast punk with a bratty singer and screechy female and male backing vocals. It is messy, dirty and angry, but fun and catchy. The UNRELEASABLES are a band that could probably use one of those svengali-type band managers to whip them into shape, but then I would have something else to complain about. (CK)
(P. Trash)

THE VOCALNICS – "654321 (Let's Have Some Fun)/ Kanack Attack"

Before we get to the vinyl, can I bitch for just a second about all the labels that are putting stuff out without pic sleeves? I get that it saves a little dough, but the pic sleeve is crucial to the 7" experience. Without one, you might as well just download the shit. OK, the record. I happen to like the style of garage music that goes back to the easy/loungy side of the '60s and this one fits right in there. Side A is a sort of harmonic number and the B-side is a surfy instrumental. I imagine these guys hang out at tiki bars and have linoleum flooring in their kitchens. Good stuff. (KK)
(Double Crown)

VOLCANICS – "Girls, Girls, Girls" CD

A frequent comment in reviews for bands that draw heavily from past eras is that they also combine a modern touch and that somehow makes them better or more relevant. But you know what? Bullshit. The best '60s style bands are the ones that not only perfectly capture the music just right, but that also have the knack to play it with sincerity and feeling and an appreciation for authenticity; they play homage to a better time in music. The VOLCANICS evoke the period of Americana just before the turbulence of the decade changed everything, including rock'n'roll. The haunting instrumental sounds of bands like the FENDERMEN or the TRASHMEN are channeled throughout here; and even though the genre is replicated perfectly, the songs are all original and written by the band. There are a few non-instrumental tracks on this reissue (recorded around 2006, I think), and they also fall along the early '60s vibe, sounding a bit like early TOMMY JAMES & THE SHONDELLS. I usually pass up on most revival bands because they don't hit that precise sound, but the VOLCANICS totally nail it. Awesome. (BG)
(Orbitone)

DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS – "Much Obliged" CD

Rough-around-the-edges indie rock with alt-country leanings. I believe this band hails from Boston, but there's a Southern flavor to these songs; it's been a while since I listened to LUCERO, but that's what comes to mind when I hear this. Reviews of earlier material referenced DINOSAUR JR, but those influences have fallen by the wayside to be replaced with the sort of stuff that gets guys with western shirts and trucker hats hoisting their PBR tall cans. (AM)
(Gunner)

WEIRD TV – "Sufrir/Sex"

First off, this is one of the best bands in America right now, no denying. Live, their intensity is infectious; the demo tape blew my fucking mind out the window. This has two songs on it, the B-side, "Sex" is an incredible fucking song and one of my favorites by them...fuck it—"Sufrir" is amazing, too. I don't wanna write this review and I am so bummed to report that the recordings on this 7" are fucking awful. It sounds flat and slick; the guitar riffs manage to come off like AEROSMITH; Lizet, who is one of the most amazing girl growlers on the scene, just sounds kind of bored and nervous. It's like I can't even imagine how they managed to do this but the whole thing is completely drained of any rage or danger. It's super clean with weird peaks of echoes and reverb, it almost kind of comes off as cheesy arena rock in some way. On their demo tape and live they're closer to the rawness of VULPESS with some weirdo psychedelic-soaked guitar riffage over it, and seriously so fucking good. If at all possible, go see this band live, get yr hands on one of their demo tapes and definitely do not judge them based on this 45. This band is amazing and this record is just a bummer representation of them, totally not to be trusted. (MM)
(Perennial Death)

WHITE FANG – "Younger" EP

The cover of this has four scruffy kids holding pugs whilst standing in front of a forest that's actually wallpaper. One song reminds me of both WEEZER and PROMISE RING with added weird prog/math guitar solos inserted half way through. The other side starts out with a song that is something like the aforementioned combo trying to play a joke "punk" song with added cookie monster vocals. The song that rounds out that side is sorta more like some '80s beach punk thing with the lyrics "We're an arty band / We're a party band / Duuuuuude." repeated over and over. Do you want this in your life??!! (LG)
(Marriage)

THE WILD WEEKEND – "Punch" CD

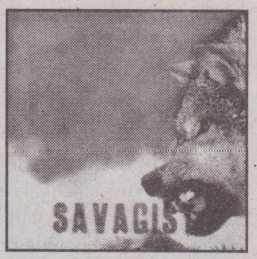
Apparently this is an Italian band, but they sing in good enough English that I looked it up in a couple places. The music is melodic garage rock with wailing guitar leads and a snotty-guy-at-the-bar feel to it. These guys sound like they knock over tables during their sets and the inside cover picture is three dudes (the band possibly?) looking all beat up and bloody. It sounds fun and a little dangerous while still being largely accessible to a wider audience; much in the vein of bands from the popular garage revival of the first part of the '00s like the STROKES or the HIVES. (BL)
(Tornado Ride)

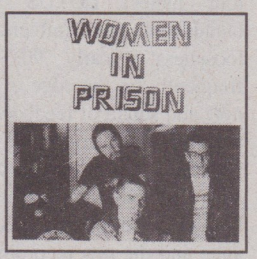
WOMEN IN PRISON – "Strange Waves" EP

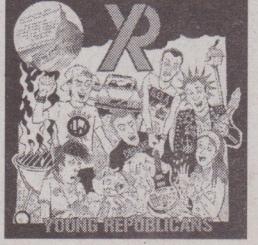
First off, judging by the cover, our esteemed small-dicked columnist Logan Worrell has some tight competition in the Austin hobo stalker of the year contest. Good luck, buddy. This shit rocks, I mean *rocks*, not like your AC/DC "let's all drink beer" type of rock but in your all fucked up "I will knife you in the eye" HALO OF FLIES kind of way. This is brutal, way too brutal for those pasty-face cats that normally buy shit on hipster HoZac, go piss up a poll, you Brace Belden wannabes. If the GOD BULLIES or the COWS were ever able to write a coherent tune instead of being gutless fake junkies, they just might have sounded like this. Chicago ain't got nothing on these cowboys. Punk rock played by a bulldozer. (SD)
(HoZac)

WSZANIEC – "Wideo Mondo" LP

The general path these folks are taking is in the wake of NEUROSIS circa the early '90s—tom-heavy, pounding, cyclical drums and wailing, ghostly, full-throated vocals. The guitar sound is more like an indie rock band getting all heavy and crazy—sometimes SONIC YOUTH comes across very clearly. Unfortunately, they have a few tracks consisting of mild keyboard noises. Otherwise, their worst songs aren't bad and the good ones are pretty fucking good. I'm only a moderate fan (at best) of either band cited above, but this record has me







involuntarily nodding my head. They fuck around with weird time signatures and stuff, but it doesn't detract from their power. The recording is ideal—pretty clean, not too heavy—and pressing eight songs on a 12" at 45 RPM certainly helped. The painted cover only adds to their success. The band is from Krakow and the lyrics are in Polish. I'm not convinced this record will be widely distributed in the US, so start searching or pounce when you see it. (JM)
(Blinded / No Sanctuary / Teeth to Concrete / Yama Dori)

X25X – "Distortion of Life" LP

This is the best French band I have ever heard. I don't mean to be rude, but France just doesn't know how to make rock'n'roll. Not only that, but they incredibly effective. Fast-paced and pummeling post-punk heaviness. It is so rad. This is serious. These folks don't fuck around. This is a skillfully crafted, incredibly engaging album. Every band wishes they were as sick as X25X, they just don't know it yet. (HD)
(Lofi)

X RAY EYEBALLS – "Crystal" EP

Is this what they call beach punk? I don't know, WAVVES? BLACK LIPS? BEST COAST? OH SEES? TY SEGALL? NOBUNNY? Are we at SXSW yet? I'm bored. (MM)
(Hozac)

YADOKAI – "Sokushinbutau" EP

Much like their East Coast peers (and recent tour mates) LOTUS FUCKER, YADOKAI blends raw punk influences with the chaos and looseness of early '90s emo. These songs are frequently on the edge of falling apart, but every note and squall of feedback belongs exactly where it is. This is a good, maybe great EP in its way, because it's a reflection of the live show. These songs are cathartic, and they are clearly meant to be performed, not recorded. It is passionate, full of spite and the raw recording is as close to the live sound as could probably be achieved in a studio. If possible, listen to this record in a darkened basement, throwing yourself against the walls with a beer in your hand. Or, even better, go see YADOKAI after listening to this EP and realize that's the piece you've been missing. (AU)
(Video Disease)

YOUNG REPUBLICANS – "Sabotage Your Cookout" EP

YOUNG REPUBLICANS are remembered (by HC and straight edge historians/nerds, anyway) for being three-fourths of YOUTH OF TODAY's *Can't Close My Eyes* lineup; this EP is their nine-song demo, recorded circa 1983 and thought lost to the ages until about a year ago. Allegedly the music for three tracks here were eventually recycled for YOUTH OF TODAY and PROJECT X songs... YOUNG REPUBLICANS is definitely the TEEN IDLES to YOUTH OF TODAY's MINOR THREAT though—the germ of the idea is there, but it's not as focused or serious yet. Interestingly, the band shows more of an influence from early SEVEN SECONDS than from the harDCore or XClaim scenes. Anyway, the label did a great job on the reissue—thick vinyl, fancy sleeve, insert with lyrics and pictures—so keep an eye out. (CS)
(More Than a Witness)

ZULUS – "Heatwave" EP

ZULUS' vocals are evocative of brat-noise "greats" RUSSIAN TSARLAG and SEWN LEATHER. The music itself is rather ominous. Very hip. (HD)
(Wizard Mountain)

V/A – "Busted at Oz" LP

Wow, I didn't see this one coming! I'm from Chicago, and while this is without a doubt *the* punk compilation to own from Chicago, it's also a *live* record, so it's not always my first choice. My mind is literally blown away by the packaging; they've perfectly duplicated the original heavy cardboard sleeve, here without a hint of its notorious ringwear. I'm tempted to say these are actually un-used sleeves from the original 1981 print run. Whatever the case, you will *never* find a cleaner cover on an original, might as well give up now! As for the music, well fuck, this is all the first wave Chicago punk bands, none of whom released an actual studio record until '82 or '83. So this is the earliest glimpse you can get, all recorded on the final two nights at Chicago's first dedicated punk club Oz. NAKED RAYGUN sounds barely anything like their later anthemic punk selves, more akin to KILLING JOKE or FEAR's more annoying experimental side. The EFFIGIES contribute two songs; "Guns or Ballots" is arguably their finest recorded moment. SUBVERTS are great inept raw punk rock, SILVER ABUSE is annoying as fuck DIY punk wave with a girl singer, and DA kinda kill the vibe. But far and away it's STRIKE UNDER who steals the show here, far out-punking their rare Wax Trax 12" and one of their two tracks doesn't even have vocals! For a live record, this has remarkably great sound, loud and clear. Having finally given this a long deserved spin, I'm happy to report this just moved to the top of the Chicago punk heap! (GB)
(Permanent)

V/A – "Casual Victim Pile II" LP

I guess this is a sequel to the Austin scene comp that came out recently on Matador (??). Like the first volume, this was compiled by Gerard Cosloy, which may mean something to the geeks in our readership. Regional comps are hard as hell to pull off, but this does a pretty damn good job. While not every tune is a winner, there's more than enough here to warrant investigation. Highlights include OBN III'S (whose single this month also ruled) and WOMEN IN PRISON (doing their best BOBBY SOXX). Low points include HATCHET WOUND (wimpy DIY boy/girl duo) and the ZOLTARS (see previous description, though faring better). The rest fall somewhere in between, though I keep coming back to NAW DUDE's ridiculous hardcore tune, which I simultaneously love and hate. Worth a look. (MC)
(12XU)

V/A – "I Don't Want to Be a Part of Your So-Called Punk" CD

This comp is all over the place with hardcore, punk, garage, metal and even a reggae tune. A twelve-song collection from Norway that does have a nice noncommercial feel to it. No-name bands based on my shallow standards as far as I can tell. Mostly for locals who want to hear some new bands. (RL)
(Tonehjulet Kraftpest)

V/A "Speed Trials Worst Bands of West Michigan" – LP

This is what punk is all about folks. This comp was recorded in one day last February at the Suicide House in Grand Rapids, MI and the recording quality is really good. Seventeen bands, one day, one house, wtf... I am willing to bet that any of these bands are great to see live This comp runs the gamut of straight ahead USHC, to grind, to crusty '90s influenced HC and beyond. The variety of punk influences heard on this record is pretty amazing and while this might sound like a nightmare, pretty much every song on here is good. The stand outs being SHATTERED BADGE, POSITVE NOISE, ATTENTION SPAN, HEGEMONICIDE, SCABBURGER, SKELETON PARTY, the REAL BITTERS, "No Rockstars" by BUNNY SKULLS, XTRA VOMIT, DISSERTION and APOSTACY, but I am willing to bet that any of these bands are great to see live. This is a one sided, LP with a screen of Michigan with some scary skulls within the state lines on one side on red vinyl. Cool screened and spray painted reused cover. Comes with an 8.5 x 11 booklet with one band a page. I guess shitty pixilated art is an aesthetic these days, I prefer all the cut and paste stuff in here along. Xtra praise for XTRA VOMIT for their page about their song "Manhandled" and the loads of info that they took the time to get together on it. The only problem here is that the band order and the booklet layout don't exactly match. It's only a few pages, but anyone unfamiliar with these bands will have a hard time figuring out who's who by the end of the record. I have to insist that all these songs should be heard because no matter what my personal punk taste may be or yours, this comp is what I hope is going on in all scenes across the US and world. The intro on the booklet says: "What you are holding is a piece of history," and while I hate statements like that, they follow this with an earnest call for punks to support their local scene. That and all the music on this comp has me agreeing. (MB)
(Punks Before Profits)

CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO

12XU: www.myspace.com/6747058
A389: www.a389records.com
Abandon Hope: abandonhoperecords.bigcartel.com
Agipunk: www.agipunk.com
Airiston Punk Levyt: www.aplevyt.com
Alien Snatch: Danzigerstr. 1, 10435 Berlin, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.com
Alive: 919 Isabel unit G, Burbank, CA 91506, www.alivenergy.com
Alterta Antifascista: www.myspace.com / alertaantifascista c/o Timo Nehmtow, Engelbosteler Damm 35, 30167 Hannover, GERMANY
Alternative Tentacles: PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA, 94141-9092, www.alternativetentacles.com
Anarkopunx: www.anarkopunxrecord.webs.com
Automatica Aggregazione: myspace.com/automaticaaggregazionepunk
Bedroom Suck: PO Box 130, Ashgrove, Queensland, QLD 4060, AUSTRALIA
Black Tie Operation: www.myspace.com/theblacktieoperation
Black Water: P.O. Box 5223 Portland, OR 97208-5223
Blinded: blindedrecs.wordpress.com
Break the Chains: www.myspace.com/btcmetalpunk
Build Me a Bomb: 12 Rue Kuhlmann – RDC 59000 Lille France
Busted Knuckle: www.myspace.com/bustedknucklerecords
Contra: www.contra-net.com
Convulsive: www.convulsiverecords.tumblr.com
Crackbox: crackboxxx@gmail.com
Crapoulet: www.crapoulet.fr
Cryptas: CP 02011 Mexico, DF MEXICO, cryptasrecs@yahoo.com.mx
DC-Jam: 2733 E. Battlefield Rd., #164, Springfield, MO 65804, www.dcjamrecords.com
Deranged: www.derangedrecords.com
Diner Junkie: PO Box 1716, Buford, GA 30515, www.dinnerjunkie.com
Dirtcult: www.dirtcultrecords.com
Dirty: www.dirtyfaces.de
Don Giovanni: www.dongiovannirecords.com
Double Crown: www.doublecrownrecords.com
D.S.I. Archives: PO Box 346, Dunn Loring, VA 22027, www.myspace.com/dsirecords
Dudes Dudes: www.myspace.com/dudesdudesrecords
Eager Beaver: 16-2 Higashibun Inoshiri Wakimachi, Mima-City Tokushima 779-3602 JAPAN, www.eagerbeaverrecords.com
Eaglebauer Enterprises: 216 Buckingham Pl. Apt 2, Philadelphia, PA 19104, mpurchla@yahoo.com
Engineer: www.engineerrecords.com
Evil Bird: www.myspace.com/phrasemongers
Evil Weevil: 12 Harbor Rd. Levittown PA, 19056
Falling Down: www.fallingdownrecords.free.fr
Fashionable Idiots: www.fashionableidiots.com
Fat Wreck Chords: www.fatwreck.com
Flower of Carnage: www.flowerofcarnage.com
Freedumb: www.myspace.com/freedumbfromnorway
Girth: www.girthrecords.com
Goner: 2152 Young Ave Memphis TN 38104, www.goner.com
Grave Mistake: www.gravemistakerecords.com
Guerilla: www.asso.diy.free.fr
Gunner: PO Box 105824, 28058 Bremen, GERMANY, www.gunnerrecords.com
Halo of Flies: www.haloofflies records.com
Handsome Dan: www.handsomedanrecords.com
Handstand: PO Box 110398, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.handstandrecords.com
Hard Stopping: music.geocities.jp/electrophonictokyo
Henke Bolla: www.formogenhet.com
Hodad: theeludds@googlemail.com
Hozac: www.hozacrecords.com
I Hate Punk Rock: www.ihatepunkrock.net
Inside Music Lessons: www.insidemusic.com
In the Red: PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com
It's Alive: www.itsaliverecords.com)
Kick Rock: www.kickrock.org
King of the Monsters: P.O. Box Scottsdale, AZ 85252 USA
Kiss Of Death: PO Box 75550 Tampa, FL 33675
Ladd Frith: POBOX 967, Eureka, CA 95502, kotmrecords.blogspot.com
Laida Provincia Crew: www.myspace.com/gliutimi
Lifeline: PO Box 692, Midlothian, IL 60445, lifelinerecords.net
Lofi: 2 Rue Socrate – 13001 Marseille FRANCE
Longshot: 1301 17th St., SF, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com
Love Over Voltage: loveovervoltagerecords.blogspot.com
Mankind: PO Box 265, Bellflower, CA 90707, www.mankindrecords.com
Maniyax: www.myspace.com/maniyaxrecords
Marriage: www.marriagerecs.com
Middle Class Zombie Attack: mczarecords.blogspot.com
Mightier Than Sword: www.mtsrecords.com
Milk: www.milkrecords.bigcartel.com
Miravoice: www.myspace.com/miravoice
Muy Autentico: 2998 Wendell Way Riverside, CA 92507
Mystik Motorcycles: www.myspace.com/mystikmotorcycles
NBT: www.myspace.com/nbtrds
NHL95: www.nhl95.co.nr
NMG Worldwide: no information
Noise Punk: noisepunkrecords.blogspot.com
No Sanctuary: nosanctuaryrec@wp.pl
Not Shy of the DIY: notshyofthediy.co.uk
Odessa: PO Box 1301, Carrboro, NC 27510
Odio los Discos: odiolosdiscos@hotmail.com
Old Hat: oldhatrecords.blogspot.com, ukrdiy@gmail.com
One Percent: www.onepercentrecords.com
Orbitone: www.myspace.com/thevolcanics
Paper and Plastic: www.paperandplastic.com
Pasazer Fanzin HC/Punk: PO Box 42, 39-201 Debica 3, POLAND, wwwpasazer.pl
Pass Judgement: passjudgement.bigcartel.com
Perennial Death: www.perennialdeath.com
Permanent: 1914 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60614, www.permanentrecordschicago.com
Peter Out: monumentswe@gmail.com
PPM: www.postpresentmedium.com
P-Trash: www.ptrashrecords.com
Punks Before Profits: www.punksbeforeprofits.org
Push My Buttons: pushmybuttons.se
Reactionary: www.reactionaryrecords.info
Radio Underground: www.diwproducts.com
Rebellion: Veemarktkade 8a, 5222 AE Den Bosch, HOLLAND, www.rebellionrecords.com
Red Lounge: www.redloungerecords.de
Rejected: iprhardcore.com/rejected
Rendezvous: 8806 16th Ave. SW, Seattle. WA 98106, rendezvousrecordings@gmail.com
Residue: www.residue-records.com
Rip It Up: ripitup.bandcamp.com
Rock Bottom: www.myspace.com/rockbottomwrex
Ruido Sonoro: Edo, Mexico CP 52957 MEXICO, reneolvera22@gmail.com
Savage: c/o Hildebrand, Farstav. 89 (8 Tr), 123 34 Farsta, SWEDEN, www.savagemagazine.com/savage-records/
Scum Buzz: needlesxpins@gmail.com
Sell Our Souls: www.selloursouls.com
Shock! Horror!: PO Box 4328, Oceanside, CA 92052
Shogun: shogunrecordings.com
Shove: www.myspace.com/shoverecords
Skrammel: www.skrammelrecords.com
SMRT: www.smrtrecords.se
Slow Death: www.slow-death.org
Snuffy Smiles: 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku Kita-Ku, Kyoto, 603-8117, JAPAN
Southpaw: southpawdistro@yahoo.com
SP: www.sp-records.com
Spastic Fantastic: www.myspace.com.spasticfantastic
The Spines: www.myspace.com/spinesnyc
Square Of Opposition: www.squareofopposition.com
Static Shock: Büknerstraße 6, 12047 Berlin, GERMANY, www.staticshockmusik
Streaks: www.streaksrecords.de
Super Secret: www.supersecretrecords.com
Swiss Punk: www.swisspunk.ch
Tardis: 559 rue Hurd Gatineau, QC J8P 2T3, CANADA
Teeth To Concrete: satanstornade@gmail.com
Telephone Explosion: www.telephoneexplosion.com
That Lux Good: www.myspace.com/thatluxgoodrecords
Tonehjulet Kraftpest: www.kraftpest.com
Tornado Ride: www.myspace.com/tornadorecordings
Toxic State: toxicstate.blogspot.com
Trowels: www.myspace.com/thetrowels
Twintoe: www.myspace.com/twintoerecords
Twisted Chords: www.twisted-chords.com)
Undislessed: thrashattack@dbmail.com
Unwucht: neusyland@t-online.de
Vertex: vertexrecords.bigcartel.com
Viking on Campus: Vikingoncampus@gmail.com
Video Disease: vdrecords.bigcartel.com
VRAH: www.telepunk.wz.cz
Windian: www.windianrecords.com
Wizard Mountain: 1013 Pacific St. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11238
Yama Dori: Maciej Szymonowicz, PO Box 1373, 20-950 Lublin 15, POLAND, atwarwitheverybody@gmail.com

DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Bryony Beynon, Matt Bleyle, Dan Goetz, Brad Lambert and Ray Suburbia.

THE ANSWER LIES – This is a compilation of this band's (partial) discography. Not sure why this tape was made because it's probably still pretty easy to find the 7"s for dirt cheap in record stores across America. Anyways, this band played "Boogadaboogadaboogada" style punk. They kind of remind me of GAUNT. It should also be noted that this band played/helped set up crazy shows in their hometown of Las Cruces, NM... Literally they booked shows with a guy whose family owned farmland. My friend blew up his own turd with an M-80 while attending/playing a show there. (Matt) (23-song cassette, no lyrics, Dirt Cult Records, 713 Stagecoach dr. Las, Cruces, NM 38011)

ANTHROT – Sounds kind of like if a band that grew up listening to '90s emo/crust and decided to strip down their sound and write more straightforward hardcore songs. The end result sounds a bit like a mix between TRAGEDY and BORN AGAINST with flatter tones. The socio/political lyrics seem a bit forced/academic. They also have a song about chem trails. Good choices on covers though, RUDIMENTARY PENI "Bloody Jellies" and DROPDEAD "A Nation Sleeps," which made me want to like them more than I did. (Matt) (10-song CD-R, lyrics included, Cameo Dr. #55, Oceanside, CA 92056, loopthefeedback@gmail.com, www.anthrot.bandcamp.com3428)

BEAMSHIP BLUES BAND / NRML PPL – This is a split cassette that rules. NRML PPL is blown out/low-fi art dirge with lyrics that make it pretty clear that these "Ppl" are fucked up. But they're really good. Reminds me a bit of BRAINBOMBS or FLIPPER at times but also of the FIX when they aren't playing sludgy nihilistic shit. BEAMSHIP BLUES BAND might be even weirder. Sound like BIG BLACK or MINISTRY at times even though I'm not sure they're using a drum machine (if not this is one mechanical sounding drummer). I guess they sound like MAYYORS with more of a prog/HAWKWIND on a FourTrack thing going on. I know it's early in the game, but this is one of the best demos I've heard all year so far. (Matt) (16-song cassette, no lyrics, 4158A Juniata, St Louis, MO 63116.)

BE EASY – Holy shit! Weird band from GA. Sounds like if twelve year old skaters from the '90s that listened to DESCENDENTS or PENNYWISE wrote way too honest songs about their lives (apparently much of it spent skating at "Big Lots" and impressing their moms with their band)... They have a couple "youth crew" songs too (one of them being the "BE EASY" anthem). Honestly, by the look of the cover I thought it was going to be some kind of horrible RED LIGHT STING/Napoleon Dynamite type band. The cover is a drawing of a unicorn killing a dinosaur with a rainbow that shoots out of its horn. If this makes sense, this band has the mentality of the SIMPLETONES minus the joke beach culture vibe, replacing it with late '90s commercialized Vans culture. I dunno... this shit was funny and I actually kind of liked it. My favorite line: "Drinking IBC/My friends and me/Being so cool/Swimming in a pool." (Matt) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/beeasyga)

BIRD CALLS – A beguilingly...nice release here, from a London three piece. They are mixing up an homage to mid-nineties emo (the signs are all here, from the HEROIN-style envelope for the tape which has a woodcut screen on it, plus a cute sewn felt inner) with more indie rock stylings, bringing in a bit of extra dischordancy in the riffs. Its stop-starty and time-changey in a way that keeps it interesting. Super reminiscent of CAP'N JAZZ. Cool noodly bass lines! I find myself listening to this quite a bit, even though there are a few tunes on this demo that tend to merge into one slightly. The singer's rattled wailing doesn't ever get too melodramatic and it retains a punk edge, especially in the more off-kilter and driving tunes. Now that bands like this aren't ten a penny, I would encourage anyone who misses a bit of heart-on-sleeve action to check this out. (Bryony) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, wearebirdcalls.co.uk, cyslabe@gmail.com)

BIRD STRIKE – LA punks drawing influence from the better lo-fi Latino bands of all eras. ATOXXXICO comes to mind for the faster songs, RAYOS X for the more mid-paced ones—raw, driving and memorable. Most of the lyrics are poignant musings on their surroundings, but others are just plain dumb. All in all, a worthy addition to the current wave of excellent bands playing this style down in Los Angeles, and definitely worth tracking down. (Kevin) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, bitethecactus@gmail.com)

THE BLIND DATE – Driving, slightly loose bar punk from this Warsaw band with heavily accented female vocals in English. At times, it makes me think of early NEW BOMB TURKS or the most obvious indicators of MOTORHEAD, but despite the raw recording, energy, and decent guitar work that *does* border on wanking, I feel it falls short of garage in one direction and hardcore in the other. This ends up landing in some non-descript and not particularly interesting territory of "the soundtrack to getting loaded at some 'hip' bar after a rough day at the office." (Dan) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/blinddatepunk)

BLOOD OF THE GODS – These dudes feel like they have a lot of crust punk tendencies, but they are still a death metal band. There is lots of chugging and most songs are mid-tempo with faster parts. Some tough sounding shit. I like the few faster parts with dual vocals; they make me clench my fists and make threatening motions at my keyboard. (Brad) (8-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/botgcrust, 51 Burdette Rd., Dracut, MA 01826)

CAN TOKER – None of these skater hardcore songs is much longer than a minute, giving them a sped up powerviolence feel at times, but this is pretty much a chaotically sloppy example of stoners playing fast. It's fun, snotty and aggro while still being kind of goofy with songs about smoking weed out of cans and small towns where everybody fucks each other. (Brad) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, Jack Driver, 1053 38th Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062, cantokersk8@gmail.com)

CONSTANT DOUBT – A live radio performance from this New Jersey dirge-punk/hardcore trio. The songs sound sick, but the recording quality is barely there. I can't really make out the vocals, even with the lyric sheet (which sucks cause the phrase "dark pornography" is in there somewhere and that's the kind of creepy I like in my lyrics). They've got a short and sweet instrumental called "The Act of Freaking Out" and do a decent cover of Flipper's "Sex Bomb" if that gives you a better idea of the kind of sludge they're slinging. (Ray) (9-song CD-R, lyrics included, neveragain6655@hotmail.com)

DESENSITIZED – This is good Y2K NYHC. Vocalist sounds a bit like a young Henry Rollins though... actually they sound kinda like S.O.A. sometimes but with a more "polished," pro-tools/Bridge 9 sound. You can tell that these guys might be down to write songs after listening to CRO MAGS. Good band. Good demo. Hope to hear more from this band. (Matt) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, desensitizedhc.bandcamp.com)

THE DIRTY TRACK DATES – Drawing of a big-breasted sexy punk chick in short shorts on the cover? Check. Nautical stars? Check. Skull and Cross Wrenches? Check. A punk rawk'n'roll song about loving rock'n'roll? Check. A Reference to Suicide Girls? Check. Thoroughly mediocre DWARVES/ZEKE/SUPERSUCKERS worship. (Ray) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.thedirttrackdates.com)

A DISCO FOR FERNS – The new three songs by this cute and noisy punk band settled a music trivia itch that had been bothering me since I watched that movie *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*. The band in that movie sounds like what

a Hollywood director would come up with if they tried to copy a band like a DISCO FOR FERNS and threw a bunch of money at it. This is super lo-fi recording with a fuzzed out bass, mid-tempo drums, and dual male/female vocals. I find this band pretty charming. (Brad) (3-song CD-R, no lyrics, 11777 Brazol Way, Lindale, TX 75771, ADFF.V2E.com)

DRIPPING SLITS – Dude, you sound like you're really upset over her breaking up with you and all; but listening to tons of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE and SWORN IN and going out to see misogynistic '70s rock cover bands isn't gonna help you feel better. And with calling your band DRIPPING SLITS, I'm sure the breakup was at least partially your fault. (Dan) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics included, www.myspace.com/drippingslits)

EPIC PROBLEMS – Burly sounding melodic punk from the UK. I try as hard as I can, but I just can't avoid the LEATHERFACE comparison. It's those years of screaming at football matches and drinking pints of gravel at the pub vocal style. There's some great DEAD BOYS styled classic punk riffs in there too. Nothing knocked me off my feet, but before I realized it I had listened to the demo three times in a row. Solid stuff. (Ray) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, myspace.com/epicproblem.com – yes, there's a second dot com in that web address)

FLEXXEHAWK – Sounds like a band that listens to shit loads of music and tries to incorporate it all into songs that are too long. For example, track one starts off sounding like "Goo" era SONIC YOUTH and then explodes into "Kings of Oblivian" era PINK FARIES style chanting chorus. Track three sounds like they were listening to "Gardening at Night" by R.E.M. when they wrote the song. Most of the other tracks (before I stopped listening) remind me of the song "Attacked by Monsters" by MEAT PUPPETS or if ANIMAL COLLECTIVE was a '90s rock band. I guess this band rules though (great musicianship) just hard to take it all in knowing that if you tried you might end up asking yourself why you did... but that's probably my own fault. (Matt) (16-track CD-R, no lyrics, Soundcloud.com/flexxehawk, Zombieolocaust2005@yahoo.com)

THE GHOSTS – This one comes with a disclaimer that reads, "Unfortunately you have before you what we call our demo. Rather than request that you listen to it, we merely ask of you the more just and merciful alternative: See to it that this finds its way into the deserving hands of the person whom you most despise." After reading that, I was expecting some awful noise/feedback laden non-songs, but this is nothing of the sort. It falls somewhere between tolerable '90s style alternative rock and folk punk. Think THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB meets SUPERDRAG. Well-written songs that are melodic, bouncy and catchy. I'm keeping this, and I'm not the least bit worried about some hidden self-loathing surfacing. (Kevin) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.facebook.com/theghostsoc)

GOODMORNINGTOWELS – Solid Filipino political hardcore. Frantic, a little out of tune, fuzzy sounding, and just what I needed to hear. Songs in both Tagalog and English about the G8, dumpster diving, war, and probably other punk stuff. But I don't know Tagalog. (Ray) (13-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/gmt)

THE HUNG UPS – Salt Lake City punk'n'roll bearing an almost uncomfortable resemblance to SCREECHING WEASEL, musically and vocally. Whoa-oh's and riffs we've heard before with some decent leads sprinkled in. Songs about pizza, skating, having no future, etc... Passable party music for the pop-punk crowd. (Kevin) (10-song CD-R, no lyrics, thehungups@gmail.com)

LITTLE SISTER – Not to be confused with the vocal group associated with SLY AND THE FAMILY STONE, LITTLE SISTER is a dark and dare I say brooding, melodic hardcore band from Ohio with dual vocals. They're a solid unit for this sort of a thing. Sounds like emo/black metal with good SABBATH tones. Good riffs occasionally, but usually way too melodic and intensely epic for my tastes. For fans of WAGNER who can't listen to hours and hours of intensity. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, tapehaus.blogspot.com)

MYCLONIC JERKS – Apparently the punks are still taking acid. Total early FLAMING LIPS feel to this stuff with some GUIDED BY VOICES hooks for good measure. They say they are from Oakland, so maybe a little slowed down TULSA in there too? It's good stuff walking that fine line between late '80s melodic punk and early '90s college rock. Great songwriting—no question about that. I just wish there were some lyrics in here cause the song called "Find Jesus" has got me asking some questions. Well, actually just one, I guess. (Ray) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, myclonicjerks@gmail.com)

NAPOLEON COMPLEX – Hardcore band from Waterbury, CT. The lead singer sounds like Roger Miret and Alice Bag at the same time, which I'm down with. This band is the best when they're not trying to do the HATRED SURGE switch off vocals thing, but if the back-up grind core vocals have to stay I'd recommend remixing them cause they tend to dominate and not for the better. My favorite part is when they use digital delay on the line "They kissed your ass/They sucked your dick... dick... dick... dick..." (Matt) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, 1922 Thomaston Ave. Fl2, Waterbury, CT 06704)

NAPOLNARIZ – If I knew for a fact that Americans could play pop punk as good as this Puerto Rican band I might start paying attention to it. I guess the main difference is that these guys sound like they actually listen to real punk and not D4/JAWBREAKER/Gainesville, FL and that's it. I'm not sure why I mention that stuff because NAPOLNARIZ is a sick punk band with nothing in common with the commercial sounding American pop punk of the past couple decades. Anyways, this band reminds me of KRIMINELLA GITARRER and that is something that doesn't happen very often. You could put their song "Gatos Negro" on a BACK TO FRONT or BREAK THE RULES comp and you might not be able to tell that they are from the 2000s. This is a tape of their first full length, "Todos Terminamos Igual" (2002) and I'm not sure why this is my first time hearing it because everyone who likes punk rock should have heard it already. (Matt) (11-song cassette, no lyrics, Lcodrnr@hotmail.com)

NOBODY'S HERO – The sticker on the cover of this CD pretty much wrote my review for me: "Featuring members of GUAJIRO, the VANDALS and AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY." And for those of you not in the know, GUAJIRO is a Latino punk band from Florida that did a reality show for MTV tres called Rally MTV where they raced around South America in a battle of the bands type situation. Barf. My abuela Raquel would have delicately described them as sin verguenza. But I gotta say the BOLD cover was a nice, albeit pointless, touch. (Ray) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, nobodyshero305@yahoo.com)

NO LESSONS LEARNED – This Philly band plays in a late '80s NYHC style with bit of a modern groove akin to some of the Lockin' Out bands, and most of the songs on here reminds me of SICK OF IT ALL's "Friends Like You." I really want to like this demo more—the riffs are mostly good, it's neither too "posi" nor tough guy, and there's nothing objectionable about the production. But what's a deal breaker for me is that there are zero fast parts on here: everything is mid-paced hardcore or mosh parts. This might work if they were deliberately going for a heavier sound, but even after a few listens to cleanse my palate of the expectations I had, I still can't get into it. That said, they're competent at what they do, you the reader might like it more than I do. I'm at least interested to see how their next effort is. (Dan) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, myspace.com/nolessonslearned)

NO REGIME – Right on, it starts off with an instrumental with a bunch of samples of machine guns and explosions. I'm a sucker for that kind of thing. The band has a melodic, almost power pop sound with Latin and ska popping in once in a while. They try to keep it gritty and yell in some parts, but the singing parts with guitar upstrokes is pretty disarming and makes their angry parts more cute than threatening. There are probably a lot of pretty girls at their shows. (Brad) (6-song CD-R, no lyrics, noregime@gmail.com, www.myspace.com/noregime)

THE OUTS –This band really rules! Stripped down '80s hardcore played solidly with super raw female vocals. They play so fast I wondered if they sped up the tape. They sound like they might think KORO and URBAN WASTE are the best hardcore bands of all time. They also have some more mid-tempo songs though. Personally if I was going to cover a riot grrrl song I wouldn't have chosen "Rebel Girl" as they have (I think I'd probably go with "I Wanna Puke On The Stereo") but to each his/her own. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, T-K Records, 2538 Beaufort Ave, Toledo, OH 43613)

PINE BARRENS – Metallic hardcore from these politically charged Brits. A bit crusty at times, bordering on black metal at other points, but always intense. These guys make no qualms about their political stance either. Lyrics deal with issues such as occupational governments, thought control and media agendas. The last track is over

nine minutes and transitions into a slower jam featuring a sax and violin, which I actually enjoyed quite a bit. Overall, too much metal for me, but it's nothing if not precise and sincere. (Kevin) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, pinebarrens.bandcamp.com)

PROLETARIAT PUNCH – Whoa! A three-inch CD-R! I feel like I'm the Last Action Hero or something! One song of AUS ROTTEN-esque relentless political hardcore and one song of crusty as fuck reggae for the black clad, dreadlocked set. Total fucking SUBHUMANS/CITIZEN FISH. I feel like this thing should come with anti-vivisection tracts, a patch, and a 40 oz. The songs are great, the recording sounds crisp and sweet without being so slick it ruins the music. These two songs alone have forced me to reconsider my decade long staunch Fuck St. Louis stance. I'm *really* looking forward to hearing more shit like this from these guys. (Ray) (2-song CD-R, lyrics included, info@utopiastl.com)

JOSH REDD SANCHEZ – This is a tape of this guys stand-up comedy. I'm not going to pretend I know what makes a good comedian other than that they have to be funny to me to be good. This didn't make me "LOL" that much, but this guy seems like he has the "stand up comic" thing down pretty well. I'd say if AGNOSTIC FRONT is RICHARD PRYOR than this guy is like H2O. Basically, he's funny in the way your co-worker might be funny, but he has the balls to get in front of people and talk. (Matt) (6-song cassette, $5 ppd, reddjosh@hotmail.com)

SENIUM – Ever heard a demo that was recorded by Steve Albini and mixed by Bob Weston? Apparently, this one was! And these guys really sound like they want to be *In Utero* era NIRVANA. Unfortunately, this New Jersey band makes the VINES look like URBAN WASTE. Hate to sound like a record executive, but these songs lack the hooks and/or the experimentation to make a band that sounds exactly like NIRVANA interesting in 2011. Honestly, if this wasn't so over-produced sounding it would probably sound better (at least less like LINKIN PARK) and it might distract the listener from zeroing in on the mediocre songs that would make a six minute version of "Rape Me" sound good. I wish this were a fake demo/band even though it kinda is. A real grunge band is supposed to send out a fake demo and lie about how the dudes from SHELLAC were involved. (Matt) (12-song CD-R, no lyrics, 1881 Rt. 37 West Apt. 216, Tom River, NJ 08757, seniumcontact@gmail.com)

666 PACK – What's the deal with starting off your CD with a sample of a crowd chanting "OZZY! OZZY! OZZY!" You're a metal band, it's already understood that your like him. I'm not well versed enough in contemporary metal to even attempt to make accurate comparisons, but this stuff seems pretty alright. The songs are of good length, and the riffs are pretty heavy and sick. I'm getting the feeling that this band is full of punks/hardcore kids who got good at their instruments, and thus bored of just playing four chords over and over. Maybe it's the BLACK FLAG logo knock off, or the GANG GREEN cover. Either way, it shreds when it needs to, the vocals never veer into the realm of cheese, and it never gets into that or speed for speed's sake territory I find so annoying. (Ray) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

THE SLOW DEATH – New MPLS pop-punk project featuring folks who've done time in the ERGS! and PRETTY BOY THORSON. Immediate comparisons could be drawn to the ARRIVALS, TILTWHEEL and any number of acts currently doing the dual guitar melodic punk with gruff but warm vocals thing. Musically this is a bit less driving than the aforementioned bands, and has a more pronounced cow punk influence. I dig the first song a lot, it has the best hook on the CD and the lyric "Have I wasted too much time getting wasted?" hits pretty close to home. After that though, things slow down and get a bit samey—more songs about girlfriends and blah, blah, blah... I feel like with their cumulative pedigree these guys can do a lot better than this. (Kevin) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, $5 ppd, 1311 E. 37th St. Minneapolis, MN 55407)

STREET JUSTICE – When I sit here bored in the middle of nowhere in the southern Midwest and wish I could go see a killer punk show, this is pretty much the kind of band I hear in my head. Simply put, this is punk rock. This is hardcore. It's pissed, it's fast, it's energetic, and it's honest. Nothing groundbreaking here, but who fucking cares?! There a reason people still sound like bands from the '80s, cause some of that shit was tight as fuck. I'm not gonna compare these dudes to anyone specifically, cause they don't really sound like anyone specifically. They just sound familiar. Like maybe they were on some old mixtape someone's older sibling or ex made you when you were first getting into punk. Plus the album cover is some demented hand-drawn hybrid of Where's Waldo and Sergio Aragones drawings in the margins of *Mad Magazine*. I've been staring at this thing cracking up for like fifteen minutes straight. I guarantee you that his thing will be blasting at full volume off the porch of Lost Cross while I'm grilling out all summer long. (Ray) (8-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.streetjusticesf.blogspot.com)

THE SURROGATES – This is some pretty good No Idea/the Fest style punk. Actually, it's better than most of that stuff cause it's less on the beer coozies and more on the social politics. I hear touches of old ALKALINE TRIO and HOT WATER MUSIC and OFF WITH THEIR HEADS in a sea of late '90s octave chords. The more I listen to this the better and better it gets. I would *love* it for these guys to get big enough to play the Fest and get a bunch of bearded, sweaty, PBR gut ridden, apolitical party punks to scream along with "You kept him clear of us queers for so fucking long...who's laughing now!" (Ray) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, surrogates315@gmail.com)

TAKE WARNING – The vocalist sounds exactly like that of IGNITE, and the music isn't too far off either, except with a few more more beaten-down singalongs and a few soaring guitar solos that get in the way of what's being played. Had this band been around fifteen years earlier, they would've been opening for Fat Wreck Chords bands left and right. (Dan) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, takewarningpunk.blogspot.com)

VALGEEHAN HANGMOON – The majority of this abomination is a gent moaning and crying, literally, over guitar noodling that goes absolutely nowhere. There is one track that's a faster punk-ish song with actual instrumentation, but it's ultimately forgettable. Recommended for fans of horrible Korean art punk, a genre whose existence I wish I were still unaware of. (Kevin) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, $3 ppd, Zipgoosuck 3950 65th St. 1FL Woodside, NY 11377)

WINELORD – This is totally fun, poppy, hook laden punk from this all lady three piece. They remind me of the great and infallible TACOCAT in spirit—a faster EMILY'S SASSY LIME. A BOBBYTEENS without the John Waters '50s teenage delinquent vibe. There's even some SWING DING AMIGOS/SHARK PANTS weirdo middle of nowhere pop punk riffage going on. Well damn, now that I actually look at the liners, I see that they're from Tuscon! Makes perfect fucking sense! This is music to dance and sweat and puke and fall over to in a basement until you sober up from the three Four Lokos you tried to slam before they went on stage. This CD makes me want to party with this band so badly. But I'll happily settle for partying while listening to this CD for now. (Ray) (13-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/winelord)

V/A "New York Rules" – This is a great sampler featuring a variety of New York bands, including songs from PREGNANT, NOMOS, HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS, NIGHT BIRDS, NUDE BEACH, the MEN, BYRDS OF PARADISE, and DAWN OF HUMANS. Each band contributes two songs, and the records that each song comes from are also listed (only three of the sixteen are previously unreleased), so that interested parties can get their hands on the records containing the songs they like. What I also like about comps like this is that they have the potential to introduce fans of hardcore bands like NOMOS or DAWN OF HUMANS to other sounds such as the proto-alternative of PREGNANT and NUDE BEACH or the hateful dirge of the MEN, or vice versa. Every single song on here is a ripper. (Dan) (16-song cassette, no lyrics, c/o Burn Books, 66 Steuben St. #3, Brooklyn, NY 11205, burnbooks.org)

V/A "These Are the Voices in the Back of your Head" – Yay! This comp comes in a screen printed self-closing cardboard box and contains songs by ULTRATUMBADOS, LYBIANS, INTIFADA, the STATE, POSITIVE NOISE, RAYOS X, BOG PEOPLE, RAW NERVE, UX VILEHEADS, the TIMEBOMBS, the RENEGADES OF PUNK, and MUCH WORSE. Not sure if there's an overarching theme to this comp, or of any/all of the songs are exclusive or not, but every song on here rules. Most of the bands have songs on this comp that are fast, raw hardcore of some variety, with the RENEGADES OF PUNK being the notable exception. The perfect thing to pop into your tape player to help you get you through whatever you need to get through. (Dan) (15-song cassette, some lyrics included, c/o Not Normal, notnormalpunk.com)

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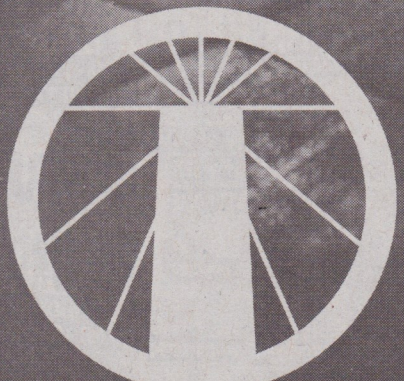

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ZINES

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(JB) Julia Booze	**(DG) Dan Goetz**	**(BG) Bob Goldie**	**(JM) Jeff Mason**	**(DS) Dionne Stevens**
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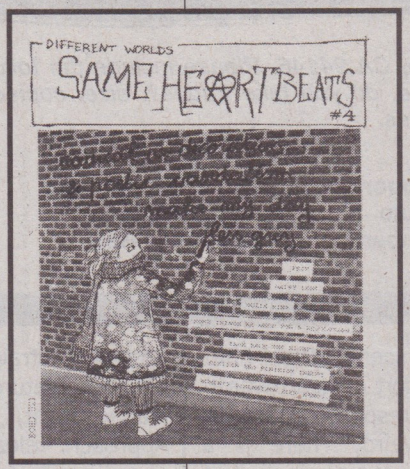
BROKEN PENCIL #50 / $5.95
8.5 x 11 – printed – 72 pgs
This magazine reads and feels like it is the *MRR* of zine culture. It has columns, zine/book reviews, excerpts, comics and a ton more. It's a Canadian zine, so a lot of their focus is there, but not exclusively. There is a really good feature article about how zine culture isn't dead. That was fun to read. And there is a big article listing 50 Canadian people of interest in the zine/art/music scene. Being an outsider to zine culture, it wasn't the most interesting aspect of Broken Pencil, but I can imagine it would be a pretty cool read for folks more immersed in the culture. If you're so into zines that you want to read a zine about zines... Look no further; this should be next on your list. (FS)
www.brokenpencil.com

CHUNKS #1 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
Thank you zine assigner for giving me this eye candy dripping with salty masculinity... *Chunks* is produced somewhere in Australia. There was no return address on the envelope nor is there any contact information within the zine. How clandestine... Anyway, if you don't know what a "jabron" is, then this zine will leave you with mouth open gawk and head scratching. This first issue has good interviews with Floorpunch (so awesome!), Vigilante and the singer of Rampage where the interviewer asks some very interesting questions about the use of the word "Fag" in the bands lyrics, which is answered with not the most intelligent rationale, but he does explicitly say the band did protest to his use of the word, was discussed at length and that neither he nor the band are homophobic. That particular question is a little window into the sort of convoluted politics that intrigues me about this scene... Right after that, the singer has a sort of heart-warming, yet balls out tough response on the ills of animal neglect. Weird. There is a reviews section that covers zines and music. My favorite part of this first issue is G.F.S. which stands for Get Fucking Serious and it is all about getting your body into shape that includes diet and supplement advice, training with weights and conditioning, and good liftin' music. It ends with a cautionary and motivational word from the author about staying off steroids and staying motivated to achieve your goals. This zine is pretty much a total nightmare for anyone I am friends with, but I have to admit that it is pretty fascinating to me. While these dudes (yeah, it's all buff white dudes, duh) may seem to be pretty much the antithesis of the very fabric of my being, I have admittedly always had a morbid fascination with the vegan straight edge scene. I guess it's our mutual fanatical love for Negative Approach and that being into hardcore as much as, or moreso, than some of these Jabronis, there are some undeniable commonalities. This is an interesting zine because it does have a focus and agenda. I am a little weary about some of the Australian stuff that is covered only because I don't have much of a way to find out if they have any sketchy shit going on, but it seems like this zine tends to pick bands that rage according to the author, but that also seem to have only the fundamentals of this type of hardcore in mind: Playing brutal HC, being in shape, being vegan and being dudes. (MB)
No contact information

CHUNKS #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
Ah yes... Issue number two of this Australian straight edge, super bro zine. This one features an interview with Waste Management, a history of Negative Approach releases with highlights and sound quality (can I get a "Fuck Yeah"), an interview with Reckless Aggression and the same sort of review section as the first issue. The Waste Management interview with Carms does indeed contain some of what I expected—talking shit on people out side of their punk scene and calling people "stuck up bitches" when someone has just as much contempt for him as he does for society, that shit is funny. And yet he is very critical of what is going on in hardcore, which is rad. He seems to be into questioning everything and not backing down from a fight, which I can appreciate. Aside from the music, it's the dialectic relationship with politics of this particular brand of HC that really pull me in. I get it to some degree, but it's pretty convoluted and while these bands often reject "politics," they are often steeped in it. Which brings us to the Reckless Aggression interview with the singer Allan Cowie who also does the zine *Groin Gravy*. Yep, that charming zine... I admit, I wouldn't trust this guy alone in a room with a ten year-old girl, but I guess that's the effect he is going for—nasty. A cleaner GG Allin? Anyway, letter to the editor of *Chunks*, your zine is not offensive and while I don't necessarily agree with your reviews or subject matter, you are a good interviewer and you are a solid writer. If sXe HC is your shit, this is definitely interesting stuff. (MB)
No contact information

DIFFERENT WORLD SAME HEARTBEATS #4 / $5 US/world, $3 Belgium, trades
8.25 x 6 – printed – 32 pgs
This is a really cool feminist zine outtta

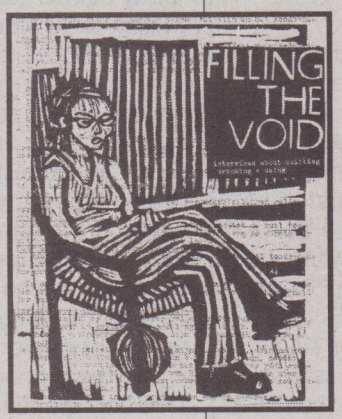
Belgium that reminds me of radical zines from the '80s and early '90s, pre riot grrrl. Nina wants a feminist revolution, and this booklet details that fact in detail from a historical perspective covering feminist rock collectives of the '70s that sprang from the women's lib movement, and from a perspective of a radical feminist that is trying figure out how her actions can bring about change now... The drawings sort of look like the illustrations on early Raincoats records, so it has this total nostalgic early '80s feel, including in the language and pro-collective building styles of feminism she espouses. There's even writing in here against academic/theoretical feminism, interesting, not sure I agree, but Nina is writing for the people not the ivory tower. I enjoyed reading this, and would recommend it for any feminist readers looking for solidarity... (LG)
NinaNÿsten / Laurent Delvauxstraat M / 9000 Gent, Belgium / Flapper_grrrl@yahoo.com



DON'T TREAD ON ME! #8 / $1 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is a weird zine filled with all kinds of randomness. A story about running into an ex-girlfriend, a fictional story about Vikings, a comic, band interview, trading cards page; it's all over the place. It's fucking chaos for sure. Some of it is okay, but a bunch of it is super lame. Ratso (the editor) is a great writer but terrible interviewer. There is an interview with the Dutch band Apers that was just plain embarrassing. Not only are these guys boring but they have this super lame "Hot Topic" concept of what punk is. When asked about the punk scene they talk about Green Day, Alkaline Trio, and Nirvana. What the fuck! And they said the Manges are one of their favorite bands?! I reviewed their shit CD last month and it was awful! Oh, and the "Ask a Racist" advise column was super stupid. Using this anti-PC sense of humor is not only pathetic, but is also just parading your white privilege. Yeah, racist jokes are really funny when you're a white dude that rarely has to even think about your skin color or have your ethnicity present you with challenges rather than advantages. We're fucking punks; we're here to creep out squares, not each other. Actually, fuck this zine. (FS)
1128 West Grace St. Apt 2 / Richmond, VA 23220

FASHIONABLE ACTIVISM #1 / $2 (+ postage?)
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
The editor's right—the intro is the weakest part. He's a nineteen-year-old guy who goes to college but isn't into it and just switiched over from writing online to doing this zine. He's only writing about hardcore punk, not his life or fighting the system. There are a pair of interviews (Mauser and No Class) which came out well. He reviews plenty of tapes records and zines, and road trips to a few shows. He's pretty good at making fun of old "reformed" bands and their ridiculous merch, but youngsters should be able to hit a soft, slow target. His photos are good too, especially the sweet Perdition centerfold. While not a top-notch hardcore zine, it's good enough. (JM)
Kevin McCaughey / 2048 N. Albany Ave. / Chicago, IL 60647 / fashionableactivism@gmail.com

FILLING THE VOID / $5 US, $7 world
8.5 x 7 – copied – 60 pgs
This is a really excellent zine from Doris press about getting sober. The whole zine is interviews with people at different points of their sobriety who had different styles of problems with drinking/drugs. With some of the interviews I related more to the interviewee and some I related more to the stories they told about the people around them. The interviews stretch from anecdotal to tips about ways to deal with things to critiques about AA. It's really thorough and completely non-preachy. There was also something really cool in recognizing some of the names and being like "I didn't know they were sober" or "I didn't know they had struggled with this". Highly recommended not only for punks trying to get sober or punks who are sober, but really it's worthwhile for anyone who has a desire to be part of a community that is supportive of everyone's choices when it comes to drinking and drugs. Personally, I'm not sober and have no plans to become sober but this zine still felt interesting, worthwhile and helpful to read. Go get it! (MM)
Doris Press / c/o Cindy Crabb / P.O. Box 29 / Athens, OH 45701 / dorisdorisdoris.com



KILL SOMEONE YOU HATE #2 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
This is the second issue of this hardcore fanzine out of Winnipeg, and the first one I've heard of out of the area since the excellent *Huge Knives That Kill* threw in the towel a few years ago. The author starts off with an Ecoli interview that strikes a good balance between casual shooting the shit and the band explaining their MO while occasionally bickering amongst themselves. I'm a sucker for good show reviews and travel stories, and there are a number of them in here, including a three-day string of shows that has the author and his friends heading to St. Louis and back. They deal with long drives, patriotic (US) border patrol people, the inability to find decent food that will fill you up, and other monotonous inconveniences of being on the road. The record reviews in here are more opinionated than informative, but the author is a good writer, and his reviews at least make for an amusing read. The layout is pretty simple but looks good, and I'm glad it doesn't obviously emulate any other zine covering the same musical territory. In spite of the author's overall negative outlook, he says he wants this zine to be a quarterly thing. I hope he does it. (DG)
906 Warsaw Ave / Winnipeg, MB R3M 1E2 / Canada / killsomeoneyouhate@hotmail.com

NEGATIVE CAPABILITY #5 / $5 US
8.5 x 11 – printed – 68 pgs
This is pretty horrible to look at—even worse to open. Like a drunk fourteen year old decided to make some "sick" shit on Photoshop, but I'm pretty sure he actually paid someone to help his magazine look this fucked up. When I showed it to my housemate he suggested that it maybe was funded with money passed out by the government for "retards to have magazines." Through

more research we found out that it was actually the combined efforts of "in-laws" and Kickstarter. com. Is it really all that different? (EC)
Josh Saitz / PO Box 12 / New York, NY 10021 / www.negcap.com

THE NEGATIVE GUEST LIST #8 / $3.50 AUS, world $5 US ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 32 pgs
Negative Guest List is a killer fanzine out of Brisbane, Australia that consistently turns me on to new bands from all over the place including the US. Brendon and the gang who do this zine have a good ear for hardcore, garage, and weird punk rock. Lot's of record reviews and interviews with Herds, Electric Bunnies, Chrome Dome, Zond, Wounded Lion, and more. (BL)
62 Washington Ave. / Tingalpa, Brisbane / QLD, 4173 / Australia / dirtyalley@msn.com

THE NEGATIVE GUEST LIST #9 / $3.50 AUS, world $5 US ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
This is probably my favorite issue of *Negative Guest List* so far with its long feature on essential black metal records. Yes, of course there's a lot of Darkthrone in there but dude is on point including Bone Awl (Bay Area, represent) and Moonblood, and he has me convinced on Peste Noire despite them being from France. I like that the politics of the bands were discussed with a minimum of judgmental reactionary bashing from any side because if you're going to be a black metal fan, you're going to have to learn how to deal with people with fucked up politics. Another totally rad part of the zine was a piece about the author hanging out with an old friend of his dad's and finding a bunch of zines his dad did in the '80s. It made me a little jealous of kids with punk parents. Also in this issue are interviews, an all-tape review section, and a flowchart of bands in a region of Australia I've never heard of. (BL)
62 Washington Ave. / Tingalpa, Brisbane / QLD, 4173 / Australia / dirtyalley@msn.com

THE NEGATIVE GUEST LIST #10 / $3.50 AUS, world $5 US ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
The last six pages of this issue is about Jay Reatard being dead and while the dude had a couple good songs in the early days I don't really want to hear any more about him, especially the piece that later appeared in that *Vice* shitbag-in-magazine-form. I'm sure that it won't take hipsters long to find a new Jesus that will lie and tell them that they're punks too and I won't have to listen to assholes with moustaches bullshit each other about which Reatards records they have when I know they just downloaded them last week. Fuck, even I can't stop talking about that guy. The rest of the zine was good. There were band interviews with Meercaz, Drunk Elk, the Throb, Taco Leg, and Breaker Morant, as well as a bunch of reviews and (weirdly) a review of a defunct label. (BL)
62 Washington Ave. / Tingalpa, Brisbane / QLD, 4173 / Australia / dirtyalley@msn.com

ONE WAY TICKET #7 / $3 ppd
4.5 x 7 – copied – 60 pgs
Sweet funny short stories about moving to Pittsburg. Anarchist politics, dumpstering, and bike riding all make their presence known. Everyone loves a pretty zine. With good strong cut and pastes styles filling the pages and a two-color letter press cover topping it off, this does not disappoint. This is a good zine for those looking for overly nostalgic representations of shit you do every day. I ain't against it, I'm just looking for more. (EC)
48 Alice St / Guelph, ON NIE 228 / Canada / onewayticketzine@gmail.com

PASAZER #27 / ?
8 x 10 – printed – 140 pgs – Polish
Not sure how I became the defacto reviewer of all foreign zines—just cos I'm from Europe doesn't mean I can speak Polish! What is it about Germany and Poland that has them putting out amazing, huge printed zines in their own language? This one from Poland looks amazing, it's chock full of interviews, pictures etc... The content is very music heavy featuring interviews with Bad Religion, Jello Biafra, Suicidal Tendencies, Us Bombs, Geriatric Unit, tons of reviews and the like. If you can speak Polish, this is really amazing. Also comes with two mix CDs one of which is an Alternative Tentacles sampler. (TB)
www.pasazar.pl

PLASTIC BOMB #73 / ? 3,70
8.25 x 11.75 – printed – 82 pgs – German
Man, I wish the CD compilation that accompanied this issue contained music by some of the bands covered within the pages, yet it's cool to hear 28 mostly unknown (to me) bands so I'm not really complaining. But the Undertones and the Spermbirds! I didn't even know these bands were around in any form these days. I definitely would like to hear what their new tunes sound like (then again, maybe I don't?). And Yuppicide (looking pretty fucking evil I might add)? I totally forgot about that band; I used to love them in the early '90s during the awesome ABC No Rio era. And as if seeing these interviews isn't frustrating enough for me because of the language barrier, there are also interviews with Masshysteri and the Youth Brigade (LA)—both way up high on my list of favorites. Damn it! For those who don't know, *Plastic Bomb* is a fairly long running German punk magazine that's always chock full of band interviews, articles, and a ton of reviews. There's so much in each issue that it's hard to list everything. More highlights this time around include an interview with Anders Leben, a write up on the Buenos Aires hardcore scene, and an article covering the current issue of Muslim integration within German society. The list goes on. If you're a German speaking punk I assume you already read this on a regular basis, and if you're not you'll just have to suffer like I am right now. *Ein weiteres fantastisches Ausgabe dieses deutschen Punk-Magazin!* (BG)
Plastic Bomb / Postfach 100205 / D-47002 Duisburg / Germany / www.plastic-bomb.de

POIGOD #1 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs
You know you are looking at something college brought to you when you have to look up some big words only to discover

they aren't words, or are misspelled enough that research is required to identify the target word. Ah, youth. I like literary journals; they are totally hit or miss—this one having a wide swath of worthwhile writing amidst total dribbling garbage. The good stuff is as good as the bad stuff is horrifying. One thing I have a hard time looking past is the editorial inadequacy. The cover has faux case binding of some purty floral fabric; maybe that energy and attention to detail would have a better application in actually reading the submissions. I know spell check is ruining the population's ability to read and write, but you still have to *use* spell check in order to make that defense. Last, it isn't just fiction. There's photography, poems, a comic (one of the best pieces), philosophic experimentation, and laffs. (JB)
Poigodmagazine.blogspot.com

RIPPING THRASH #27, early 2011 / one pound plus postage
5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
As ever, *Ripping Thrash* is dominated by crucial interviews—long, in depth, and relevant, if sometimes a bit aged. Steve Hyland, who organizes the Means To An End fest at Bradford's legendary one in twelve space, has done three more of these fests since this interview was done. See You In Hell and Active Minds also appear and have a lot to say. There are reviews and a bit of photography as well. I like that the reviews do not kiss ass. This year being the 25th anniversary of the zine, Steve has much more planned for the rest of the year, and this issue is a great start. Here's a zine that lives up to the name! (JM)
PO Box 152 / Burton-On-Trent, Staffs / DE14 1XX / England /
www.rippingthrash.com

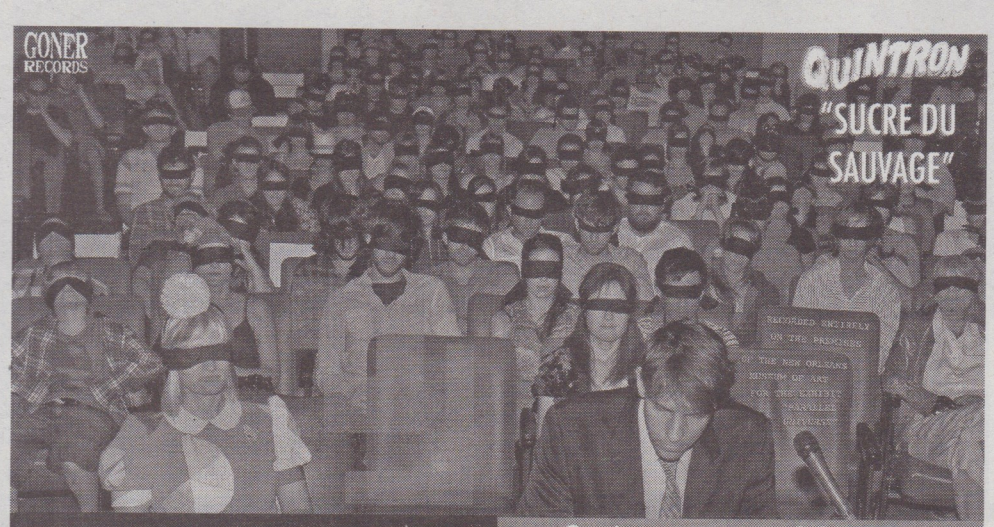
SEWER TROUT #1 / Free
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
When this came in for review I thought it an odd coincidence that someone would use the name of the somewhat-obscure Lookout! band. It came as an even greater surprise to realize that someone from Washington, D.C. cared enough about this band to collect what information he could gather—including an interview with drummer and *Maximum* shit worker Hal MacLean—and create a zine in Sewer Trout' s honor. It' s really well put together and is more of a reflective consideration of the meaning of Sewer Trout to the writers than it is a compendium of information. It' s this sort of archiving that makes zines so special and relevant and helps us to develop a greater appreciation of where we've been and where we' re going. I'll be looking forward to the 23 More Minutes zine in the future! (CR)
1409 Longfellow St. / Washington, DC 20001
pogomachine78@hotmail.com / jack45rpm@gmail.com

SLINGSHOT #105 / newsprint /$1 free to prisoners
11 x 17 – printed – 24 pgs
Amazing to see these East Bay anarchists still at it. As usual lots of lefty coverage, this time covering the recent squat eviction in Oakland, plight of the Buffalo, mining encroachment, zine reviews, art and the usual information about upcoming anarchist events. I'm not sure I'm totally the demographic for this, but I'm certainly glad it's still out there. (TB)
3124 Shattuck Ave / Berkeley, CA 94705

STUDENT INSURGENT Vol. 22, #2 / Free or $15 annual sub
8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs
Having been around in one form or another for over 22 years, the *Student Insurgent* seems to have undergone some alterations in recent times. On the plus side I would say that I dig the (youthful) idealism behind the effort and I really appreciate the addition of nature photos, poetry, and a general artistic aesthetic. I also like the Studs Terkel inspired interview with a 75-year-old man who has some life experience to share. There are also a few great articles in here, like "On Peace and Violence" and one defending the necessity of an uncensored and daring media in order to sustain democracy, but the occasionally interesting issue seems a bit incomplete just the same—many of the pages are wasted by having lots of white space and/or they're feeble in content (one short letter or haiku for an entire page?). Also, some of the photos are very pixilated and visually distracting while others are just fine. Ultimately this is one of those free publications you pick up when you're grabbing lunch around campus and it gets left behind on the table when you're done. (BG)
1228 University of Oregon / Eugene, OR 97403 / studentinsurgent@gmail.com

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #28 / $3
3 x 4 – printed – 6 pgs
If I am not too enthused about a zine at first glance I usually try to peruse the inter-web to find some more information about the zine. The first quote I read on the *Xerography Debt* website as this, "Remember, support review zines and they in turn help support the whole community." And of course being the gung-ho community organizer that I am, this quote struck a cord with me. The introduction is a call to arms for the zine community to produce at least one zine in 2011 to help the printed word sustain itself a while longer. A brief "where are they now" of past zinesters graces the following pages, then on to the soy meat of the feast—the reviews. Rated and reviewed by fourteen different zinesters, the writing is as eclectic as the zines. From personal zines, musical, sexually comical, to artsy there is something here for everyone to read and learn about. I just wish they were still distributing their zine independently and not with a certain "radical" publishing company. Alas, that is another story for another time! (DJ)
Davida Gypsy Breier / P.O. Box 11064 / Baltimore, Maryland 21212
davida@leekinginc.com /
www.leekinginc.com

ZINEWORLD #30 / $4 US, $5 Canada, $7 world
8.5 x 11 – copied – 40 pgs
Of the zines that pretty much just review zines, this is my favorite. The reviews, for the most part, are witty and well done, and a number of punk zines appear, in addition to a hell of a lot of other stuff. But it's the editorials and news that I like best. The editor attacks the terrible, stupid book *Fanzines* (by an English art professor) for its many inaccuracies and total contempt for the people whose work she's reproducing. I do think it's pointless and self-defeating to parse what's "legal" reproduction and what isn't. Also, in this piece and in the news section a lot of the parameters of the discussion are from a blog discussion board. They print free classified ads for your zine. This zine makes me smile. They don't break even on what they charge, so they're always looking for donations. (JM)
PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro, TN 37133 / www.undergroundpress.org



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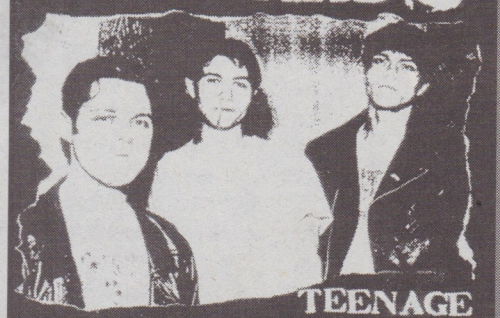

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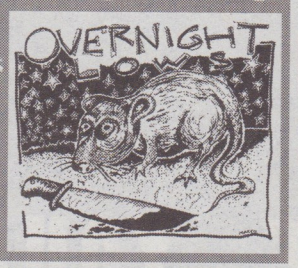

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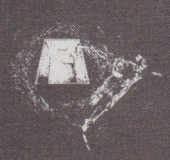

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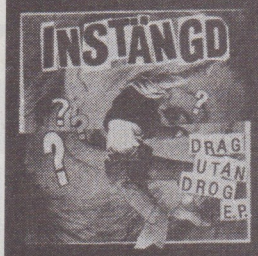

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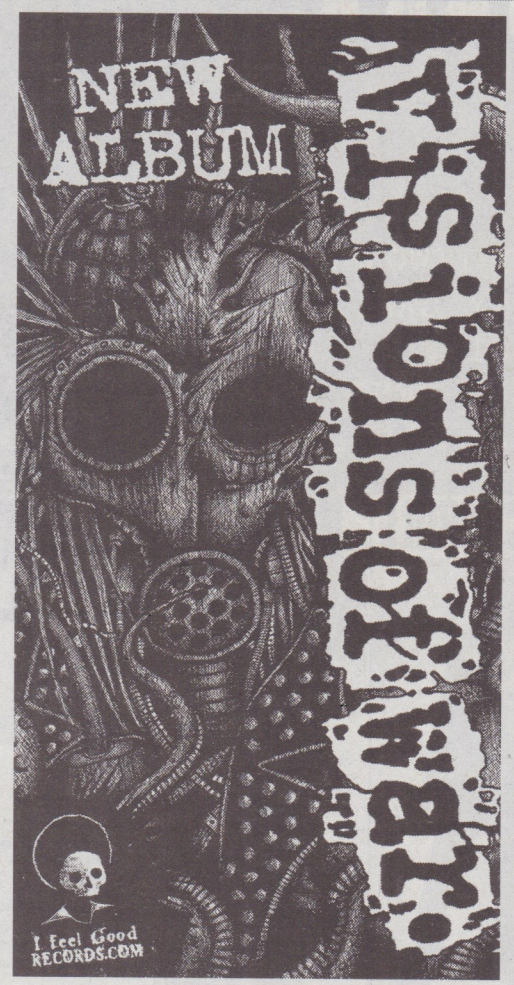

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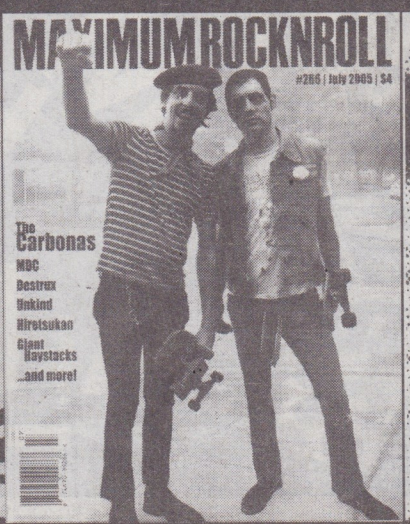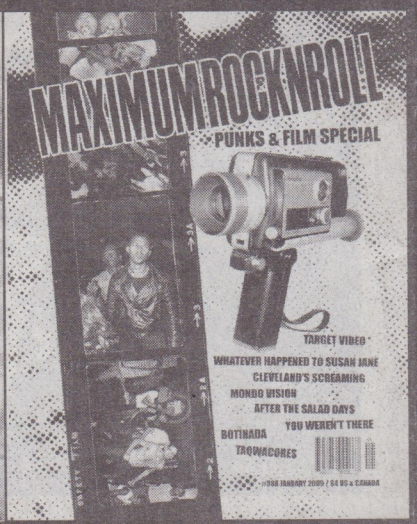
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